

ANCIENT ANTIOCH

FROM THE SELEUCID ERA
TO THE ISLAMIC CONQUEST

ANDREA U. DE GIORGI



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ANCIENT ANTIOCH

From late fourth century BC Seleucid enclave to capital of the Roman east, Antioch on the Orontes was one of the greatest cities of antiquity and served as a hinge between east and west. This book draws on a century of archaeological fieldwork to offer a new narrative of Antioch's origins and growth, as well as its resilience, civic pride, and economic opportunism. Situating the urban nucleus in the context of the rural landscape, this book integrates hitherto divorced cultural basins, including the Amuq Valley and the Massif Calcaire. It also brings into focus the archaeological data, thus proposing a concrete interpretative framework that, grounded in the monuments of Antioch, enables the reader to move beyond text-based reconstructions of the city's history. Finally, it considers the interaction between the environment and the people of the city who shaped this region and forged a distinct identity within the broader Greco-Roman world.

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*Inseguire con te
tutte le onde del nostro destino,
Stefania*

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AAES</i>	<i>Publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899–1900</i> ; New York, 1903–1930 I R. Garret, <i>Topography and Itinerary</i> , 1914 II H. C. Butler, <i>Architecture and Other Arts</i> , 1903 III W. K. Prentice, <i>Greek and Latin Inscriptions</i> , 1908 IV E. Littmann, <i>Semitic Inscriptions</i> , 1904
<i>ANS</i>	<i>American Numismatic Society</i> ; New York
<i>Antioch Archives</i>	Excavations Diaries, Field Reports, Correspondence, and Objects Catalogue, 1932–1940. Antioch Expedition Archives, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University; Princeton
<i>Antioch I</i>	G. Elderkin (ed.), <i>Antioch on the Orontes I. The Excavations of 1932</i> ; Princeton, 1934
<i>Antioch II</i>	R. Stillwell (ed.), <i>Antioch on the Orontes II. The Excavations. 1933–1936</i> ; Princeton, 1938
<i>Antioch III</i>	R. Stillwell (ed.), <i>Antioch on the Orontes III. The Excavations. 1937–1939</i> ; Princeton, 1941
<i>Antioch IV.i</i>	F.O.Waagé (ed.), <i>Antioch on the Orontes IV. Part One. Ceramics and Islamic Coins</i> ; Princeton, 1948
<i>Antioch IV.ii</i>	D.Waagé (ed.), <i>Antioch on the Orontes IV. Part Two. Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Crusader Coins</i> ; Princeton, 1952
<i>Antioch V</i>	J. Lassus, <i>Les Portiques d’Antioche</i> ; Princeton, 1972
<i>Antioche de Syrie</i>	B. Cabouret, P.L. Gatier, C. Saliou (eds.), <i>Antioche de Syrie. Histoire, images et traces de la ville antique</i> . Topoi Supplément 5; Lyon, 2004
<i>Braidwood, Mounds</i>	R. Braidwood, <i>Mounds in the Plain of Antioch</i> . OIP 48; Chicago, 1937
<i>BE</i>	<i>Bulletin Épigraphique</i> , annually in <i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
<i>BMC</i>	<i>A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum</i> ; London, 1873–
<i>City of Mosaics</i>	Scott Redford (ed.), <i>Antioch on the Orontes. Early Explorations in the City of Mosaics Asi’deki Antakya. Mozaikler Şehrinde İlk Araştırmalar</i> ; Istanbul, 2014
<i>CRAI</i>	<i>Comptes-rendus des séances de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres</i>
<i>CJ</i>	P. Krueger, <i>Codex Justinianus. Corpus Iuris Civilis, II</i> ; Berlin, 1914

<i>CTh</i>	P. Krueger, P. M. Meyer, T. Momsen, <i>Codex Theodosianus</i> ; Hildesheim, 2000
<i>Downey, History</i>	G. Downey, <i>A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus I to the Arab Conquest</i> ; Princeton, 1961
<i>Dussaud</i>	R. Dussaud, <i>Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale</i> ; Paris, 1927
<i>Evagrius</i>	M. Whitby, <i>The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus</i> ; Liverpool, 2000
<i>Expositio</i>	G. Lumbroso, <i>Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium</i> ; Roma, 1903
<i>Gourob, Papyrus</i>	Holleaux, M. (1906) “Remarques sur le papyrus de Gourob (1). Flinders Petrie Papyri, II; XLV; III; CXLIV”; <i>BCH</i> 30: 330–348
<i>I.Ankara</i>	S.Mitchell-D.French (eds.), <i>The Greek and Latin Inscriptions of Ankara (Ancyra). Vol. I. From Augustus to the End of the Third Century AD</i> ; München, 2012
<i>I.Ephesos</i>	H. Wankel, R. Merkelbach et al., <i>Die Inschriften von Ephesos</i> (7 vols.); <i>IGSK</i> 11–17; Bonn, 1979–1981
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
<i>IGLS</i>	<i>Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie</i>
<i>ILS</i>	H. Dessau, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> ; Berlin, 1892–1916
<i>Isaac of Antioch</i>	G. Bickell (ed.) <i>S. Isaaci Antiocheni, Doctoris Syrorum, Opera Omnia</i> ; Giessen, 1873
<i>Levi, Pavements</i>	D. Levi, <i>Antioch Mosaic Pavements</i> ; Rome, 1947
<i>Life of St. Simeon</i>	P. Van den Ven, <i>La Vie ancienne de St. Syméon Stylite le Jeune. Vie grecque de Sainte Marthe, mère de St. Syméon</i> ; Bruxelles, 1962–1970
<i>Lost Ancient City</i>	C. Kondoleon, <i>Antioch. The Lost Ancient City</i> ; Princeton, 2000
<i>P. Macarius</i>	<i>Voyage du Patriarche Macaire d'Antioche. Texte Arabe et traduction française par B. Radu. Patrologia Orientalis</i> , 22, 30, fasc. 1
<i>Malalas</i>	E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott, <i>The Chronicle of John Malalas. A Translation</i> ; Melbourne, 1986
<i>MAMA</i>	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua</i>
<i>McAlee, Coins</i>	R. McAlee, <i>The Coins of Roman Antioch</i> ; London, 2007
<i>PUAES</i>	<i>The Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria in 1904 and 1909</i> ; Leiden, 1907–1949
	I H. C. Butler, F. E. Norris, E. R. Stoeber, <i>Geography and Itinerary</i> , 1930
	IIB H. C. Butler, <i>Architecture. Northern Syria</i> , 1920
	IIIB W. K. Prentice, <i>Greek and Latin Inscriptions. Northern Syria</i> , 1922
	IV.B E. Littmann. <i>Semitic Inscriptions. Arabic Inscriptions</i> , 1949
<i>Pietro Della Valle</i>	Pietro Della Valle, <i>Viaggi di Pietro della Valle il Pellegrino descritti da lui medesimo in lettere familiari all'erudito suo amico Mario Schipano, divisi in tre parti, cioè la Turchia, la Persia e l'India colla vita e ritratto dell'autore</i> , II; Torino, 1843

<i>PLRE</i>	A.H.M. Jones et al., <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> ; Oxford, 1971–1972
<i>RE</i>	<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft</i> .
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
<i>SGLIBulg</i>	<i>Spätgriechische und spätlateinische Inschriften aus Bulgarien</i>
<i>Stephanus of Byzantium</i>	Augustus Meineke, <i>Stephani Byzantii Ethnicorum Quae Supersunt</i> ; Reimer, 1849
<i>Synkellos, Chron.</i>	<i>The Chronography of George Synkellos. A Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation</i> . Translated with Introduction and Notes by W. Adler and P. Tuffin; Oxford, 2002
<i>Tchalenko, Villages</i>	G. Tchalenko, <i>Villages Antiques de la Syrie du Nord. Le massif du Bélus à l'époque romaine</i> , III Vols; Paris, 1953
<i>Theod.HE</i>	L. Parmentier and G. C. Hansen, <i>Théodoret de Cyr. Histoire ecclésiastique</i> ; Paris, 2006
<i>Theod.HR</i>	P. Canivet and A. Leroy-Moninger, <i>Théodoret de Cyr. Histoire des Moines de Syrie</i> ; Paris, 1977–1979
<i>WSM</i>	E.T. Newell, <i>The Coinage of the Western Seleucid Mints from Seleucus I to Antiochus III</i> ; New York, 1977

INTRODUCTION

Today Antioch is still inhabited by a few communities that either dwell among the ruins or in habitations that they made for themselves within the gardens that cover the city, for almost no ancient house or building outside the walls is still standing. Near the place where we lodged the Turks showed us a site by the name of “Paulos of the Christians”, presumably a church dedicated to St. Paul. Yet the ruins were such that I was not able to either see or realize what it was. With nothing else that remained to be seen, three hours before nightfall we got up to take leave.¹

Thus wrote the traveler Pietro della Valle after his brief sojourn in Antioch during the summer of 1625. At that time the city lay in ruins, and gardens had crept into most of the urban space. An eccentric Roman aristocrat with an extraordinary bent for exotic voyages and good anecdotes who styled himself “the pilgrim,” Pietro was of low erudition and hardly an antiquarian. He had longed to see Antioch and its relics, but much anticipation soon turned to disquiet. Within hours of arriving in the city, Pietro and his party were back en route to the Amanus Mountains, leaving behind the apparent wasteland that they found at Antioch; not even the locals squatting amid the ruins piqued his curiosity.

It may, however, be excessive to fault della Valle’s brisk treatment of the city. Records show that at the time of his visit Antioch lay in a sorry state. By the seventeenth century, after three hundred years of political marginalization, Antioch was at its nadir. A popular Damascene jab at Antioch styled as *la pisseuse* had come to its full realization.

Pietro della Valle was not alone in his delusion. His experience of Antioch resonates in vis à vis encounters, then as now. Today, developments in



o.1. Mt. Silpius and Antakya's Roman bridge before its destruction in 1955

Antakya, the modern capital of Hatay, bury a renown that spanned centuries, and Antioch's textual visualizations conform more to the conventions of medieval *Mirabilia* than to any sense of concrete topography. Whatever happened to the Hellenic metropolis, the virtual capital of the Roman orient in the third century, the host to a vibrant intellectual community, locus of countless fierce Christological debates, seat of the count of the east, and hub of the Islamic *thughūr*?

Truth be told, Antioch's antiquities suffered greatly as a result of modern Antakya's expansion. The haste with which the last surviving Roman bridge on the Orontes was demolished in the 1960s to make way for the current Atatürk Köprüsü illustrates a common collision between old and new in urban environments, whereby respect for ancient monuments yields to the impulse to modernize (Figure o.1). Today, conspicuous Byzantine walls on the upper city and a few of their weathered stretches on the plain are the last witnesses to the city's ancient heyday; altogether they convey a sense of antiquity that is at odds with a modern urban fabric that so optimistically looks forward.

Disheartening though this picture may appear, Antakya still preserves a few riches. As one approaches Hürriyet Caddesi and enters the oldest quarter of the city, Ottoman houses and austere edifices of the French Mandate period (1920–1939) frame the incessant traffic of bazaar-goers as they stroll on cobblestone alleys in the early hours of the day, laden with the fruits and produce of the land. The heady fragrance of fresh *ekmek* pervades this neighborhood as the

bells of the nearby Orthodox Church of Sts. Peter and Paul strike the tempo of ancestral routines. Overall, this picture of an Antakya *d'antan* invariably leaves any visitor in awe. And Antioch, in turn, keeps enticing a multitude of scholars.

With this book, I investigate the narrative of settlement that led an unassuming Seleucid foundation to rise to the highest profile during the third and fourth centuries of our era. As the reader will recognize, I call into question a most common stereotype by which Antioch is held as an unknown entity, practically invisible; to be sure, its archaeological record, albeit complicated, makes it now possible to move above and beyond the fictive and imaginary reconstructions that are rooted in late antique literary descriptions. For all their wealth of information, these writings modestly illustrated the actual fabric of the city, suspended, as it were, between ekphrastic undertones and episodic zooming in. With my book, I merge old and new archaeological data to build a novel, holistic analysis of Antioch that brings into focus the city's formative processes. No study has hitherto fused the aggregate evidence of Antioch's town and country with a view toward building a concrete picture of the city and its symbiotic relation with its hinterlands. As I show in the following chapters, the history of Antioch is the history of its landscape. Since its foundation, the city was equipped with a halo of rural settlement key to its sustenance; this unity of city and hinterlands was cemented by conspicuous infrastructural systems. Being part of the same whole with the urban core, this landscape reverberated with the socio-political realities of the city and responded to them in ways that can still be read on the ground. Each of the ecologies comprised within the territory of Antioch was manipulated, often damaged, but most fundamentally built over in consequence of, or in harmony with, the construction programs and cultural transformations that unfolded in the city.

It may appear obvious to the reader that the analysis of a city goes hand in hand with that of its territory, but only in relatively recent times has the scholarship of the classical world accepted that the study of landscapes is the *sine qua non* for the comprehension of the urban realities of antiquity.² Lukewarm enthusiasm for regional-scale analyses and interests predicated on the "fashion show of cities"—as Purcell and Holden style it—that is the evolving style of the urban décor as made manifest by their architectural idioms, have limited the study of the classical city.³ Antioch is no exception. The seminal 1930s excavations went after the monuments within the city walls to no avail, while the recovery of hundreds of startling pavements served to strengthen the myth of the "apex of the East." Antioch has since traditionally been relegated to its role of prominence without due attention to the archaeology of its nucleation and growth, let alone to the complexity of its relations with a vast territory. Added to this picture are occasional glimpses of rural idyll gleaned from the orations of Libanius and Tchalenko's survey of the Massif Calcaire. These images assume, or suggest, the existence of a loosely defined Antiochene countryside.

In taking up these issues, my study shows that the landscape that surrounded Antioch was not a vacuum occasionally punctuated by sparse settlement, as echoed in much modern scholarship. Rather, the archaeological record from plain, rolling hills and highlands lends credibility to the existence of a continuum of settlement and to a community whose expansion and pulsing energy could not be halted by Antioch's city walls.

A further issue that this book calls into question, and that has affected for decades the field of Levantine archaeology, is the chasm between mounds synonymous with Near Eastern Archaeology and upland classical and post-classical, falling under the interest of the classical archaeologists and Byzantinists working in the Greek East. In particular, the divorce between these two universes is made manifest by archaeological surveys in the Bika Valley of Lebanon and the Orontes basin.⁴ The territory of Antioch was populated by hundreds of mounds that had witnessed the rise and fall of several city-states during the Bronze and Late Iron Age. Although the majority of these sites were shunned for settlement during the classical and post-classical ages, a few witnessed durable occupation and accommodated sizable communities. What the inhabitants of Antioch made of these obtrusive features in the adjacent plain and whether they would investigate their nature cannot be established. Nevertheless, it can be inferred that these mounds were deeply ingrained in the topography of Antioch's territory and served as landmarks to articulate many of the itineraries and routines that the following chapters set out to explore.

As for the chronological format of the book, the title highlights two typical—and indeed convenient—yardsticks that demarcate the parabola of “classical” Antioch. A general frame of reference is in order, as the book reckons with evidence that is strewn from the Seleucid period to the seventh century. Yet it is clear that the cultural processes and settlement trends that this book is concerned with are more fluid than any fixed dates, and I hope to be excused of my frequent forays into eras that either preceded or followed the unfolding of Hellenistic/Roman Antioch. More fundamentally, in no way do I advocate for a fissure with the Islamic epoch, when a brand new city, albeit not a capital, flourished from its Hellenistic foundations. We have come a long way from the days of Sauvaget when the superimposition of the Islamic urban décor onto Greco-Roman cities signified decline and degeneration from an age of order.⁵ Novel interpretative frameworks show us the mechanisms with which the cities of northern Syria, and not least Antioch, transitioned into the Middle Ages;⁶ it is my hope that this book opens a novel dialog with these.

I have not attempted to produce a new topography of Antioch, nor have I engaged with the discussion of building programs and their ancient literary descriptions—except where relevant to my argument. The archeological/historical literature already offers ample insights into Antioch's cityscape in antiquity. Instead, the book delves deeply into the genesis and formation of

one of the greatest urban systems of the Roman era, one which spanned from the Syrian limestone highlands to the Mediterranean coast. I highlight the modalities, agencies, subsistence bases, ecological adjustments and, in particular, the ebb and flow of settlement that demarcated this human landscape. The dazzling surround of Antioch's visual culture provides a unique and altogether fundamental corollary to this project.

It is no overstatement to say that within a few centuries after its Seleucid foundation Antioch transformed the ancient world. The city spurred an eastward tilt of the *Oikoumene* that Constantine the Great eventually brought to completion. By the days of the Flavians, the vast sweeps of the Orient and the shores of the eastern Mediterranean were sewn together thanks to the mediation of Antioch and of its territory. As Roman provincial capital, the city heightened its profile; more importantly, it attracted new constituencies, moved actors across a vast landscape, and offered exciting economic opportunities. Emperors resided on the shores of the Orontes for decades. Indeed, a history of the world and cosmological narratives could be told from the point of view of Antioch; centuries of extraordinary events authorized the apparently hyperbolic *Chronographia* of John Malalas, written in the days of Justinian.

Throughout the text, I provide a visual and spatial dimension to a narrative of urban growth, probing a vast and complex landscape that witnessed centuries of human activities. I have attempted to move beyond the essentially atomistic treatment of Antioch and its vicinity, both textual and archaeological. To that end, the book gleans evidence from a century of fieldwork conducted in the Hatay region and Syria, piecing together a vast and diverse body of archaeological realities and records. Excavation and survey data, textual sources, as well as a modest corpus of inscriptions illustrate the formation, consolidation, and gradual entwining of Antioch's town and country during the Roman period. For all its wealth of information, however, this aggregate evidence is far from homogeneous and comes with its own limitations. The different analyses that each chapter features, with some dwelling more on socio-historical phenomena and others instead grounded in the analysis of the archaeological data, indeed reflect the convoluted, variegated nature of the evidence. All in all, the autopsy of 4,000 sq. km of a topographically diverse landscape takes center stage in this work. Ultimately, it is my hope to give flesh and blood to Antioch's *ebullient countryside*, as Peter Brown put it.⁷

But, this is not merely the description of a built landscape. It is my belief that narratives of settlement not only move forward the discourse of ancient Antioch as agent of transformation, but also limn new vistas over the city and the relentless transformation of its physical fabric. From the early days of Antiochos IV Epiphanes to the initiatives under the patriarch Ephraem, and down to the Crusader epoch, Antioch and its territory were the locus of a

continuous, drastic manipulation of landscapes and mobilization of communities. With their corollary of baths, pagan shrines and churches, the suburbs at Daphne, and the villages of Narlica, Pagrae, and Gephyra, in particular, reflect the cultural tensions and religious orientations that shaped the city's physical fabric, while also serving as outlets for the city, which in the early fifth century Theodoret of Cyrrhus described as suffocating.⁸ Changes in the physical and social fabric of Antioch echoed throughout its landscape, channeled as it were by the city's main axis of traffic. This colonnaded boulevard cemented the symbiotic relationship of Antioch's town and country; more fundamentally, it formed the backbone of a vast territory, the spine that connected the Syrian highlands to the sea.

Beyond the analysis of the urban fabric in and out of the city, this study also grapples with the agencies involved in the realization of the Antiochene microcosm. How Antioch's actors operated in an environmentally complex landscape, and more to the point, how they modified the landscape – and were, in turn, modified by it in the practice of everyday life are two important questions at stake. The abundance of data drawn from pathways, rural settlements, churches, roads, pagan shrines, and magnificent villa sites is harnessed to tease out the settlement strategies and cultural outlooks that shaped the region during the Roman era. Yet, it is a phenomenological approach that is keyed into the historical datum. How this dynamic landscape was negotiated, traversed, and harnessed as the city changed its profile over the course of the centuries is the main narrative that this book explores.

This study opens with an examination of Antiochene antiquities and the realities of the archaeological record (Chapter 1), with a focus on the material evidence from almost a century of fieldwork, and in particular from the 1920s and 1930s. At that time, a remarkable constellation of archaeological projects centered in the region. Yet, we shall see that the political imbalance and rifts that loomed large in the region (at that time under the jurisdiction of the Sanjak of Alexandretta) had important bearings in the unfolding of archaeological research, acquisition of archaeological data, and ultimately in the narrative of ancient settlement that they produced.

Chapter 2 undertakes a journey along Antioch's main axis, the colonnaded street that identified the city, as well as pacing its actors and traffic. I will discuss the genesis of the city, its fusion of Mesopotamian and Hellenic accents in its plan, and not least the survival of a Seleucid visual rhetoric, as manifest in the urban décor of the city in the Roman and Late Roman periods. The dialectic between the built environment and its actors in and out of the city is particularly emphasized. I have investigated how boulevards and buildings altogether fostered a sense of a shared past while dictating daily routines. Thus crowds, traffic, and incessant movement are woven together in the making of an urban space that had broad regional implications. It is helpful to remind

readers that at its peak, Antioch's metropolitan area may have tallied 500,000 inhabitants. Indeed, contrary to modern, positive narratives of the city in antiquity, Antioch was no Hapsburg Vienna. Like most metropolises of the classical world, chaos and overcrowding loomed large. Antioch was so congested that two ox carts couldn't pass at the same time on the main boulevards, as Libanius remarked.⁹ All in all, the Rome of Juvenal may seem a fitting parallel to the city on the Orontes.

Yet, this cramping of space fueled the spreading out of suburban and rural settlements in the Early Roman period. Simply put, much settlement in the hinterlands of Antioch was a direct response to the substantial growth of an urban community that the old Seleucid armature could hardly hinder. A sense of compression and consequent unleashing of energies brought to bear the formation of a countryside that was the *de facto* extension of Antioch's urban fabric. By the second century CE a mesh of sites tessellated the plains, mountains and valleys around the city, with neither breaks, nor limits. Apparently, Antioch's territory was not demarcated by boundary markers.

A survey of the Lake district follows next in my analysis (Chapter 3). Here, in the central district of the Amuq Plain we are best able to appreciate the appearance of new settlements and landscape modifications within a complex ecosystem. The much praised yet marshy districts of the Lake of Antioch by the days of Libanius may have hardly looked like the Shangri-La that the rhetorician describes. This chapter articulates two lines of investigation: first, the fluctuations of settlement in relation to the city and its politics. Second, it brings to the fore the issue of a hierarchical system of settlements that the city spawned in the Roman period.

In Chapter 4 we turn to the highlands: the Amanus Mountains and the northeastern districts of Antioch's territory, with special emphasis on the Syrian Jibāl, the region typically referred as the "Dead Cities" near Aleppo. In antiquity a large tract of this region was integrated into Antiochene territory. With this research avenue, I lift the thick veil that has more often than not separated the Turkish and Syrian halves of Antioch's landscape, thereby allowing a fuller engagement with one of the region's most salient features, the olive oil and wine industry.

Chapter 5 examines the spatial relationship between Antioch and the Mediterranean, casting light onto its former sister city and port, Seleucia Pieria. Although initially designated as the capital of the Seleucid consortium of cities known as the Tetrapolis, Seleucia grew to become the seaboard appendix of Antioch. For most of its history, it served as an outlet whose fortunes were intimately tied to those of the city on the Orontes. During the Flavian dynasty, a most ambitious plan for the manning of the low Orontes Valley did indeed bolster a sense of unity. But, how this dynamic link between Antioch and Seleucia blurred into an unequal dependency has focused my

interest. The nonchalance with which in the late fourth century CE governor Modestus disposed of Seleucia and pillaged its colonnades for his own ends is, in my view, representative of a pervasive Antiochene attitude of condescension toward its sister city, one which was especially intense, as I show, throughout Antioch's southwestern districts.

Yet, this is also a landscape that conferred a sense of belonging, and shaped the identity of those who lived, operated, and died in the region. In the fourth century CE, gravestone inscriptions found in northern Italy proudly boasted the names of obscure villages (*komaî*) in the territory of Antioch. How an awareness of a local identity was attained and negotiated within the conglomerate of ideologies and ethnicities that lived in this patterned landscape is the main thrust of Chapter 6. In short, who were the Antiochenes? To use a poignant formula minted by Bas ter Haar Romeny: were Antiochenes (in the wider sense) Syrians in Greek garb or vice versa? Can the archaeological datum cast light on the aspirations, struggles, accomplishments and overall cultural outlook of these communities?

Finally, by way of epilogue, Chapter 7 pulls together the main threads.

At this juncture, however, it is fitting to situate this study in the broader panorama of Antiochene studies. As it stands, this book grows out of a burgeoning interest in Antioch on the Orontes and the Greek East more largely. The establishment of the *New Committee for the Excavations of Antioch and Its Vicinity* at the Princeton Museum of Art, the *Lexicon Topographicum Antiochenum*, and not least the publication of the Syria installment of the *Tabulae Imperii Byzantini*, are projects that attest to a new vitality in Antiochene studies, a field that seemed to have lost its momentum after the 1970s seminal studies by Liebeschuetz and Lassus. Of course, it should be underscored that between 1940s and the 1990s no systematic archaeological exploration took place in the Hatay region in consequence of the logistical and environmental factors that had severely limited the efficacy of the 1930s Princeton excavations. What is more, Antioch's topography remains essentially unknown. From Müller's site-plan in the *Antiquitates Antiochenae* to Glanville Downey's signature map of the city, Antioch's maps invariably illustrate urban configurations that are plausible, not real.

Yet, a wealth of fresh archaeological data stemming from surveys conducted during the last ten years affords new insights into the ancient city's layout as well as Antioch's territory beyond the Amuq Valley. The Amuq Valley Archaeological Survey under the auspices of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, as well as the recent architectural surveys of Mt. Silpius' fortifications by Gunnar Brands and Christiane Brasse attest to the possibility of inserting Antioch in a wider territorial and supra-regional context while at the same time removing the city from the abstract reconstructions that have long affected its study.

The year 2000 witnessed the remarkable *Antioch, the Lost Ancient City* exhibit. Curated by Christine Kondoleon, it brought together a stunning sample of Antiochene visual culture, while re-uniting after almost seventy years several mosaics and their respective domestic contexts. The event was tremendously energizing, as it illustrated the pavements' potential for future research and the possibilities for moving beyond the authoritative guidelines traced by Doro Levi in 1947.

Indeed, contrary to the exhibit's slogan, Antioch is far from *lost*. The shape of this book is determined overall by my desire to call into question the modern generalizations that often pervade Antioch's profile. In particular, the late antique adages about the sophisticated city reflect individual perceptions and attitudes that fall short of informing us about the way the city functioned, grew, and reinvented itself through the ages, while conferring a distinct identity on its populace.

I have sought to go beyond the ancient and modern literary trappings: through this regional, inward perspective it is now possible to analyze epiphenomena such as the appearance of the so-called villae, in the second century CE, and the expansion of rural settlement on the limestone hills during late antiquity in relation to the social and environmental pressures of the day. What is more, the book brings to the fore the actors and the conglomerate of ethnicities that shaped the fabric of Antioch. Their tenacity in laboring on the space is highlighted in my analysis. Indeed, this process has yet to come to a halt; Antakya (Hatay province) develops at the expense of its ancient predecessor. Nor is the rest of Hatay exempt from drastic modifications; large warehouses and developments now punctuate the north and northeast highways that depart from Antakya. Their numbers grow by the day; sites that this study brings into focus may be gone by the time of publishing. In the plain, altogether, the implementation of an airport, wind-mills, quarries, and extensive cotton plantations have greatly altered the configuration of this ancient landscape. Special contractors in Hatay are now in possession of mechanical equipment that razes mounds and ancient sites to the ground (Figure 0.2); much destruction was already under way at the time of the author's archaeological survey in the Amuq Plain during the early 2000s. At the same time, floods occasionally wreak havoc in Antakya and its environs just as befell Antioch for centuries before.

Keeping with a tradition of millennia of human modifications, this landscape continues to serve as locus for a complicated dialog between ecosystems and communities. How this relationship was balanced and ultimately led to the formation of a vast human landscape with a distinct, Antiochene imprint during the Roman era is ultimately the question that this book sets out to explore.



o.2. Contractors in the Amuq Plain advertising their mound-razing equipment

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study incubated for several years and involved a great number of people all equally essential to its completion. I am deeply indebted to each one of them, and the easiest way to acknowledge them all is to hark back to the very onset of this project. My journey to Antioch began with Tony J. Wilkinson and Jesse J. Casana inviting me to join in the Amuq Valley Regional Project of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. While on this archaeological survey, I began my collaboration with Asa A. Eger, friend and partner in crime of many years of research in Hatay and Cilicia, as well as scrupulous reader of many of my writings; I've learnt from him – and still do – beyond measure. For two seasons the Tell Tayinat project provided me with the most gracious hospitality for the study of the Amuq Valley archaeological collections. Tangentially, Tim Harrison and Stephen Batiuk taught me the urban culture of the second millennium in the Amuq Valley. Stephen is also the author of Maps 1–3; words fail me to express gratitude. Marie-Henriette and Charles Gates showed me the “other” side of the Amanus; working with them at Kinet Höyük was a treat.

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"Socio-economic studies in the territory of Antioch during the High Roman Empire" was the title of the dissertation that I defended at Bryn Mawr College in December 2006. I couldn't have wished for better advisors than Russell T. Scott and Peter Magee; their commitment to my research continued as the project went on to become this book. Russell T. Scott, in particular, read the earliest drafts with much care, and his poignant comments were fundamental in shaping the book's arguments and scope. In Princeton, the *New Committee for the Excavation of Antioch and Its Vicinity* at the Princeton University Art Museum enabled me to work on the 17-O materials of the 1930s excavations. My gratitude goes to Alan M. Stahl, Dimitri Gondicas, J. Michael Padgett and his staff. The re-examination of these collections, in particular, enabled me to team up with Gunnar Brands, a friend and a true luminary in Antiochene matters. The Antioch Archives at the Marquand Library are an extraordinary source of scholarship on Antioch, and Trudy Jacoby and Michele C. Mazeris were helpful far beyond any expectations. The time I spent in Princeton, however, I always associate with my fellow *Torinese* Nino Luraghi. He and Anna Dolganov were constant sources of ideas, suggestions, and unflagging friendship. I also had the good fortune to present my research in a seminar Nino and Brent Shaw taught in 2009; I hope my text does justice to their comments. The same year I also had the privilege to participate in one of the initial meetings of the *Lexicon Topographicum Antiochenum* in Paris. Catherine Saliou was an exquisite host and a great inspiration. Elif Denel at ARIT Ankara helped me with images and answered continuous inquiries on the archaeology of Hatay. Richard Posamentir and Christiane Brasse showed me that in some way Antioch's fortifications make sense. Conversations with Jill Weber and Evan Malone are embedded in the text; I am blessed to have open access to their brilliance. I have also greatly benefited from conversations with Andrea Zerbini, Jacob Lauinger, Christopher Moss, Norbert Kramer, Sarah Bassett, Michael Blömer, Tasha Vorderstrasse, Richard McAlee, Rachel Sternberg, Paul Iversen, Monica Cola, and Vito Messina. Right before sending this manuscript to press Ayşe Henri shared her dissertation study on St. Symeon and the Wondrous Mountain, and I cannot thank her enough for that.

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My final thoughts are with the people of Antakya, lately tried by the vicissitudes of a near, unspeakable war; innumerable acts of compassion bespeak the character of this community.

Lastly, my family and greatest pride: Stefania, Sofia, and Pietro. No words can do justice to the love, joy, and support they bring every day into my life.

CHAPTER ONE

ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND THE SANJAK

The period between the 1920s and late 1930s witnessed a flurry of archaeological research in Antioch and its environs. In a cultural climate that propelled both a burgeoning interest in Near Eastern studies and the establishment of fundamental museum collections, Antioch became the fulcrum of a number of archaeological initiatives that operated almost simultaneously within a small orbit. In this chapter, I review archaeological research in and around Antioch, with emphasis on the sub-regions where these projects operated and their bearings on this study. In particular, I am interested in their various agendas and topographies, and the political challenges within the region that complicated the course of excavation and analysis. We should keep in mind that from the mid-1920s onward the region that extended from Alexandretta to Aleppo witnessed escalating political turmoil. How archaeological projects coped with that state of affairs, and how their data can be positively harnessed by modern frameworks are two topics this chapter brings into focus.

I ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN ANTIOCH AND IN THE AMUQ VALLEY

On March 18, 1938, Fisher, Lassus, and Campbell of the Antioch excavations headed out to Tell Atchana, some 18 km from Antakya, to meet with Sir Leonard Woolley and Lady Woolley for a four o'clock tea.¹ While discussing workers' wages and professional staff at their respective digs, Woolley presented the imposing evidence of the kingdom of Alalakh, crystallized, as it

were, into the courtyards and remains of a two-phase early and late second millennium palace. Abundant Minoan and Mycenaean pottery finds, it seems, also caught the fancy of the visitors. Altogether, the Antioch party was very impressed by the results of Woolley's excavations, at that point in their second season, and achieved by a handful of archaeologists and specialists. It is a fact that many such get-togethers occurred during Woolley's eight years of excavation at Antioch, and many more were to take place during the spring of 1938.

Truth be told, archaeologists have a bent for reaching out to peers and colleagues while in the field. And, as we shall see, the 1930s constellation of archaeological projects in Antioch and its environs fostered much interaction among a unique class of archaeologists at a critical historical juncture. Once again, the Antioch diaries help us bring to life an extraordinary season of research in the region: Daniel Krenker from the Qalat Sim'an expedition, Henry Seyrig (Director of Syrian and Lebanese Antiquities under the French Mandate), Robert Braidwood of the Oriental Institute, to cite but a few, would often exchange visits to discuss professional matters, confront data, or simply celebrate the scholarly accolades of their colleagues. Anxieties as to what lay ahead of their respective projects were part of the conversation, too, it seems. And a sense of camaraderie pervaded these relationships: on June 26, 1938, William Campbell of the Antioch Excavations oversaw the excavations at Tell Tayinat on behalf of Colin McEwan while the latter was conducting business in Beirut. What is more, during the month of October 1938, the Antioch expedition apparently spared no effort in advocating for the permanent concession to the Oriental Institute of two neo-Hittite basalt reliefs (in actuality *stelai* dedicated to Zeus Dolichenus) recovered by McEwan southeast of Kırıkhan at Kurcuoğlu Höyük.² Negotiations and heady diplomatic efforts between the American institutions, French authorities, and the newly established Hatay government were of no avail. The *stelai* never made it to Hyde Park. More importantly though, this episode attests to a decisive watershed in the political history of the region, one that would have a bearing on archaeological projects and the acquisition of antiquities: the establishment of the Sanjak of Alexandretta, and the successive independence of Hatay from the French Mandate in 1938, after more than a decade of acute ethnic and political tensions. Put simply, the Lausanne Conference of 1923 had sanctioned the swan song of the French Mandate, and spurred Atatürk's agenda for the gradual incorporation of the Sanjak into the Republic of Turkey in 1939.³ Altogether, other than changing the social history of the region in critical ways, this key political shift also brought about a new mentality with regard to cultural heritage. From that point onward, the new Turkish government was to become accountable to its antiquities.

Hence, amid confidence, high hopes, outbreaks of ethnic violence, and lastly, enforcement of martial law, operations of several archaeological projects

were conducted in Hatay and, in particular, in the Amuq Valley in the late 1930s. One question though needs answering: why were so many archaeologists gravitating to this region at this time?

The extraordinary number of sites with rich material remains had already confirmed the valley's status as a center of paramount importance from prehistory well into the period when successive Assyrian, Achaemenid, Seleucid, and Roman empires exploited its wealth. Then as today, the valley offered ideal conditions for archaeological research. In particular, researchers made great advances in understanding settlement patterns to create an archaeological sequence from the Neolithic to the first millennium BCE.

Among various projects,⁴ the already mentioned excavations led by Sir Leonard Woolley,⁵ the Syrian-Hittite Expedition of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago,⁶ and not least the trailblazing surveys of Robert Braidwood during the 1930s at various sites on the Amuq Plain were instrumental in drawing attention to the cultural significance of this region.⁷ In addition, these early surveys and excavations now offer a thorough description of sectors of Antioch's territory prior to the introduction of mechanized farming and the implementation of extensive irrigation networks. Their catalogs of sites include landscape features and settlements that today are no longer visible because of bulldozing, erosion, and modern development, among other factors.

Yet, the formation of classical and medieval landscapes in the Amuq Valley and the relationship between the metropolis of Antioch and its countryside, as well as the administrative and infrastructural systems that connect the two, were important issues that had remained largely neglected, or at most, confined to the textual discourse. Besides the epigraphic surveys carried out by Butler's Princeton expedition to Syria⁸ and by Jalabert⁹ at the beginning of the twentieth century, no fieldwork had systematically investigated classical and post-classical Antioch and its territory.¹⁰ Only did the excavations of Antioch that began in 1932 and the surveys of Georges Tchalenko in 1935–1938 on the Syrian heights east of Antioch bring this impasse to an end.

For all their significance and diversity, however, research in the Amuq Valley and environs had one common denominator. In focusing on a select number of cultural questions, these seminal studies unwittingly reinforced the stereotypical divorce between the plain riddled with mounds and the highlands densely inhabited by Roman and Byzantine communities. This simplification long dominated the field of Levantine archaeology, and only much recent theoretical and methodological refinements make it now possible to sew the two universes together.¹¹

Yet, in keeping with the aim of the book, it is useful to examine three of these projects that, more than any other, documented the genesis and growth of one of antiquity's largest urban systems. The research of Braidwood,

Tchalenko, and the Antioch Excavations as they intersected in the mid-1930s serve to illustrate not only the interwoven experiences of a distinguished group of archaeologists, but also to lay the foundation for any successive study on the area. Outside analyses can now compare the intellectual drives of those scholars.

2 THE AMUQ PLAIN WITHOUT ANTIOCH: THE SURVEYS OF ROBERT BRAIDWOOD

*The emphasis of this survey is admittedly pre-classical; no attempt was made to investigate sites which were not in the form of mound or tell.*¹²

No archaeological manifesto has ever been more straightforward.

Robert Braidwood made it clear from the very *incipit* of the 1936 project's publication (*Mounds in the Plain of Antioch*) that the mounded sites in the Amuq Plain were the exclusive objectives of his investigation, a project that stemmed from the Syrian Expedition of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago.¹³ The 1938 bulletin of the Institute reviewed the book in the most laudatory terms: "The report thus forms a groundwork for all future archaeological enterprises in the Plain of Antioch." And it is no overstatement that Braidwood turned archaeological reconnaissance into a powerful, analytical tool.

After a crucial experience working as architectural surveyor at Seleucia on the Tigris in 1930–1931, Braidwood joined the Syrian Expedition between 1933–1938; during that tenure he completed excavations at Tell el-Judeidah, and the fundamental archaeological survey of the Amuq Plain (Figure 1.1).

With the latter he sought to pinpoint historical Bronze and Iron Age sites on the plain in order to produce a catalog. It should be noted, however, that Braidwood did not limit his research to a mere list of ancient cities, but instead attempted to situate those urban foci within their larger historical context, relying on topography and pottery collections for which the expedition had created an ad hoc sequence.¹⁴ For these reasons, Braidwood's pioneering work represents one of the mainstays of modern landscape archaeology;¹⁵ in spite of its programmatic shortcomings and obvious technological deficiencies, the information he gathered for the 178 sites that he mapped is still critical for understanding settlement dynamics in the Amuq Valley and the Levant (Figure 1.2).

It should be borne in mind that one factor played in Braidwood's favor as he wandered about the Amuq Plain: the landscape of the 1930s was in virtually pristine condition.¹⁶ This overall favorable environmental picture was reinforced by the fact that the Lake of Antioch (Amik Gölü) and its halo of marshlands were still the dominant features in the landscape, shaping the land

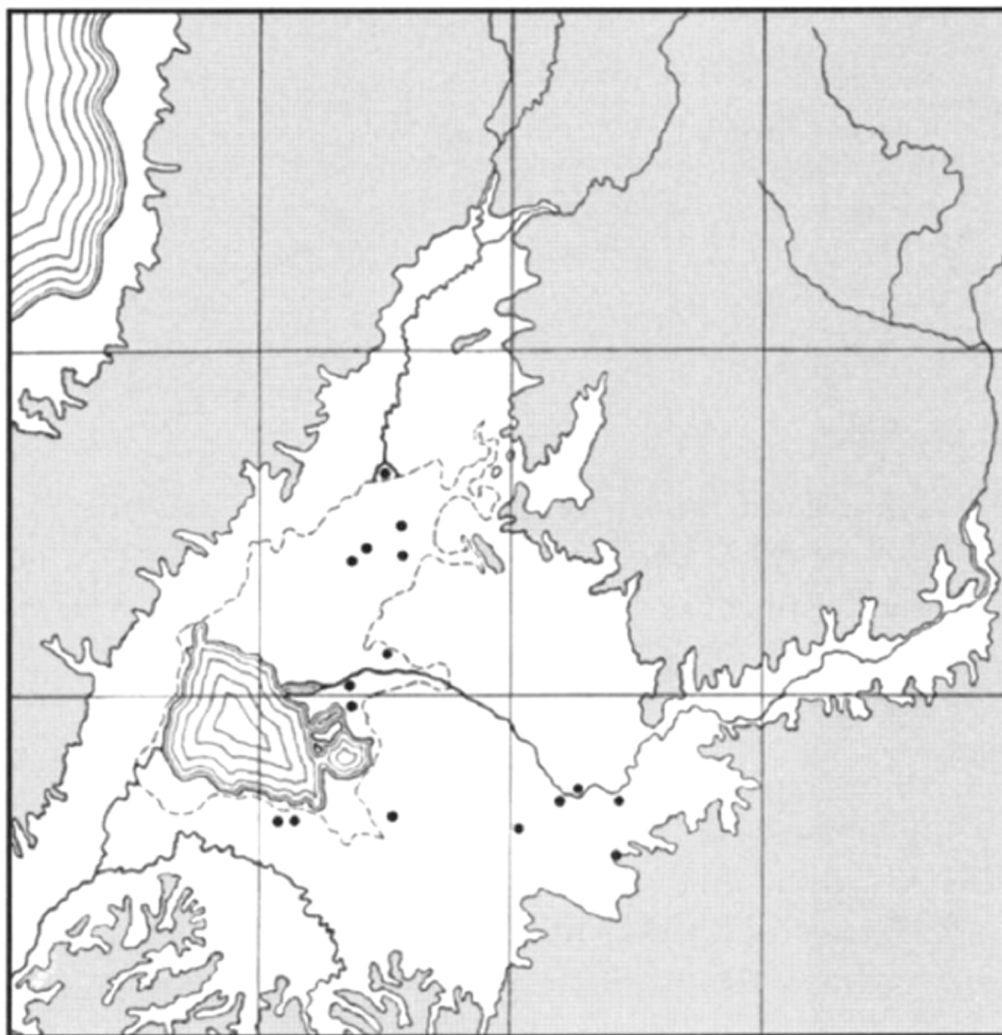


1.1. Tell el-Judeidah, still showing traces of the 1930s step-trenches

and the lives of those who lived in the vicinity. Only in the 1960s did the Turkish government undertake a vast reclamation plan in the region.¹⁷ Incidentally, Braidwood was the first to argue for the lake's formation during the Iron Age.¹⁸ At the time of his reconnaissance tours, sites like Khirbet al-Hijar (AS 181 both in the catalog of Braidwood and later of the Amuq Valley Regional Project – hence forth AVRPP) were islands surrounded by 3 m of swampy waters and were only reachable by boat.¹⁹

His approach to the landscape of the Amuq Valley essentially consisted of targeting conspicuous mounds on the plain while navigating the region on the reference grid of French Mandate maps. He surveyed primarily during the fall/winter season, when the overall visibility of the landscape was at its best and ceramics were easier to collect following the torrential rains.²⁰ Navigating the swamps and the eastern districts of the Amuq Valley in 1936, Braidwood avoided episodes of sectarian violence that occurred at sites like Tell Atchana and Tayinat, where major riots between Turks and Arabs as well as killings were reported during the month of June 1938.²¹

In accordance with this plan, he deliberately eschewed investigations on the highlands and inevitably missed most of the sites of low visibility in the plain. Moreover, as Woolley later criticized, Braidwood apparently overlooked several nucleations as he did not take the heavy sedimentation in the region into account, especially that of the Orontes basin, and in his analysis he did not



1.2. The Survey of Braidwood in the Amuq Plain: the phase map of the Late Roman period

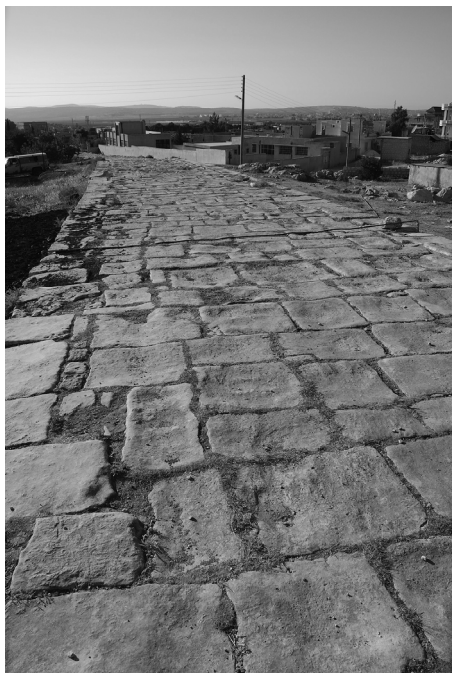
engage the geomorphological processes that modeled the valley in antiquity.²² It is on these counts that he simply disregarded many small farms and small villages that typify the quintessential classical and early medieval settlement in the plain, usually removed from main mounded sites.²³ Or it may be the case that accumulations of classical and post-classical ceramics were simply irrelevant in the general picture of settlement that Braidwood sought to convey. Be that as it may, this approach has important implications in the discussion of occupation from the Seleucid period onward. More to the point, this perspective led to cementing the notion that the plain of Antioch during the classical and post-classical ages was essentially a settlement vacuum, bereft of any traces

of urbanism and settlement. It is worth stressing that in his authoritative study on Antioch's town and country during the days of Libanius, W. Liebeschuetz modeled the vast expanses of land adjacent to Antioch in exactly the same bleak terms, drawing heavily on Braidwood's data. In particular, Liebeschuetz wrote: "the absence of substantial archaeological remains in the area might suggest that the working population lived in reed huts or other semi-permanent structures while the owners lived away from their estates at Antioch."²⁴ Far from it: as we shall see in the next chapters, a mesh of durable villages and farms that resulted from the growth of the city since the Seleucid epoch populated and exploited the plain for centuries.

All in all, of the 178 sites recorded by Braidwood, 82 present traces of Roman occupation (Phase II, Amuq R)²⁵ by means of the characteristics of the ceramics, vaguely defined "similar to the material culture of Roman Antioch."²⁶ Arguably, this criterion did not adequately serve to identify a Roman site, as incidence of Roman fine wares, fragments of frescoes and mosaics, *mortaria*, cooking, and plain wares are the decisive elements that allow for a more robust identification. Moreover, ceramics listed in the "III-Hellenistic" category plausibly include pottery that circulated in the Amuq Valley from the end of the second century BCE well into the first decades of the first century CE, thus making them attributable to sites of the Roman period.²⁷ This ambiguity explains Braidwood's difficulty in drawing a line between Hellenistic and Roman material culture and accounts for the almost ubiquitous association of Phases II and III.²⁸ It has to be conceded, however, that numerous Hellenistic sites were also densely inhabited during the Early Roman phase, a fact that has reinforced the general assumption that continuous occupation was the signature of the region.²⁹ Furthermore, a viable taxonomy of Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Roman ceramics was not going to be achieved for several years; Waagè's publication of the Antioch collections and Goldman's study of Tarsus' material culture were a decisive leap forward in the analysis of the Hellenistic and Roman wares of the Greek East that, however, did not appear until a later point.³⁰

A further difficulty with Braidwood's reconnaissance investigation is the fact that while most sites are spatially situated with a certain degree of accuracy, the information on these urban foci is not complemented by a discussion of the specific processes at work within a particular settlement and its hinterlands. It follows that no information can be retrieved as to the strategic capacity that a site, or a city, could potentially serve.³¹

On a more positive note, Braidwood's survey has to be acknowledged as the first that sought to identify factors that, in his view, shaped the landscape favoring the emergence of cities and complex societies in the Amuq Valley. In a semi-hierarchical arrangement, soil quality became the primary rationale



1.3. A surviving stretch of the Antioch–Beroea–Chalcis road near Tell Aqibrin (Syria)

behind the emergence of several of those urban nucleations; he thus inferred that the most productive areas remained so through the ages and played a key role for the increase of settlement in Roman times. Another element in Braidwood's hypothesis was a settlement's vicinity to water resources, which he nevertheless deemed to be secondary.³²

More relevant to the present discussion is the fact that in analyzing the network of routes that linked nodal points in the region, he investigated stretches of the Roman road from Antioch to Chalcis in the environs of Tell Keleş (AS 124), an artery of traffic no longer visible except for a very limited section heading toward ancient Imma in the vicinity of site AS 202.³³ Portions of the same road are visible in the environs of Aleppo, where some 800 m of the original pavement are still well preserved (Figure 1.3).³⁴

In summary, though serious methodological questions remain, these caveats do not hamper the inclusion of Braidwood's data in the study of the spatial distribution of settlement during the classical age in the plain since they can provide insights into the distribution of rural communities. Yet, some sixty years after all of these projects had been completed, it was felt that Braidwood's archaeological investigations had to be taken up again in order to build a more analytical database of sites, to finesse settlement problems, and to create a cultural framework of reference for future research.³⁵ Such were the main stimuli behind the AVRPP initiative, directed once again by the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, an archaeological field survey that has operated in this area since 1995.³⁶

This multidimensional investigation, which includes archaeological field activity, geomorphological research, and topographical survey, investigated the economic and environmental background of settlement in the valley.³⁷ Although it draws on previous archaeological investigations in the region, the AVRPP distanced itself in defining its main objectives. These primarily consisted of refining and enhancing the existing list of sites in the region, investigating the environmental setting for each of the known urban foci, including the surrounding uplands in the survey, and using intensive techniques so as to include non-mounded sites and off-site areas in the study. The fundamental benefit of this approach is that, while having advanced

one-dimensional, limited narratives of settlement like those of Braidwood, it also promoted a homogeneous, evenly distributed analysis of the landscape. Moreover, an important by-product was that fieldwork no longer focused exclusively on mounds or limestone hills; a new focus on the foothills surrounding the plain enabled researchers to foster a link between the two archaeological universes and to thereby extract insights on diachronic settlement in the region. It goes without saying that these tactics were instrumental in finally delineating the settlement dynamics during the Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Roman phases; survey of areas like the Kızılkaya hills and the Reyhanlı district to the east of the plain, as well as sectors of the Jabal al-‘Akra to the southeast, and the Amanus Mountains to the west, were critical for assessing patterns of settlement and land use in the first two centuries CE.

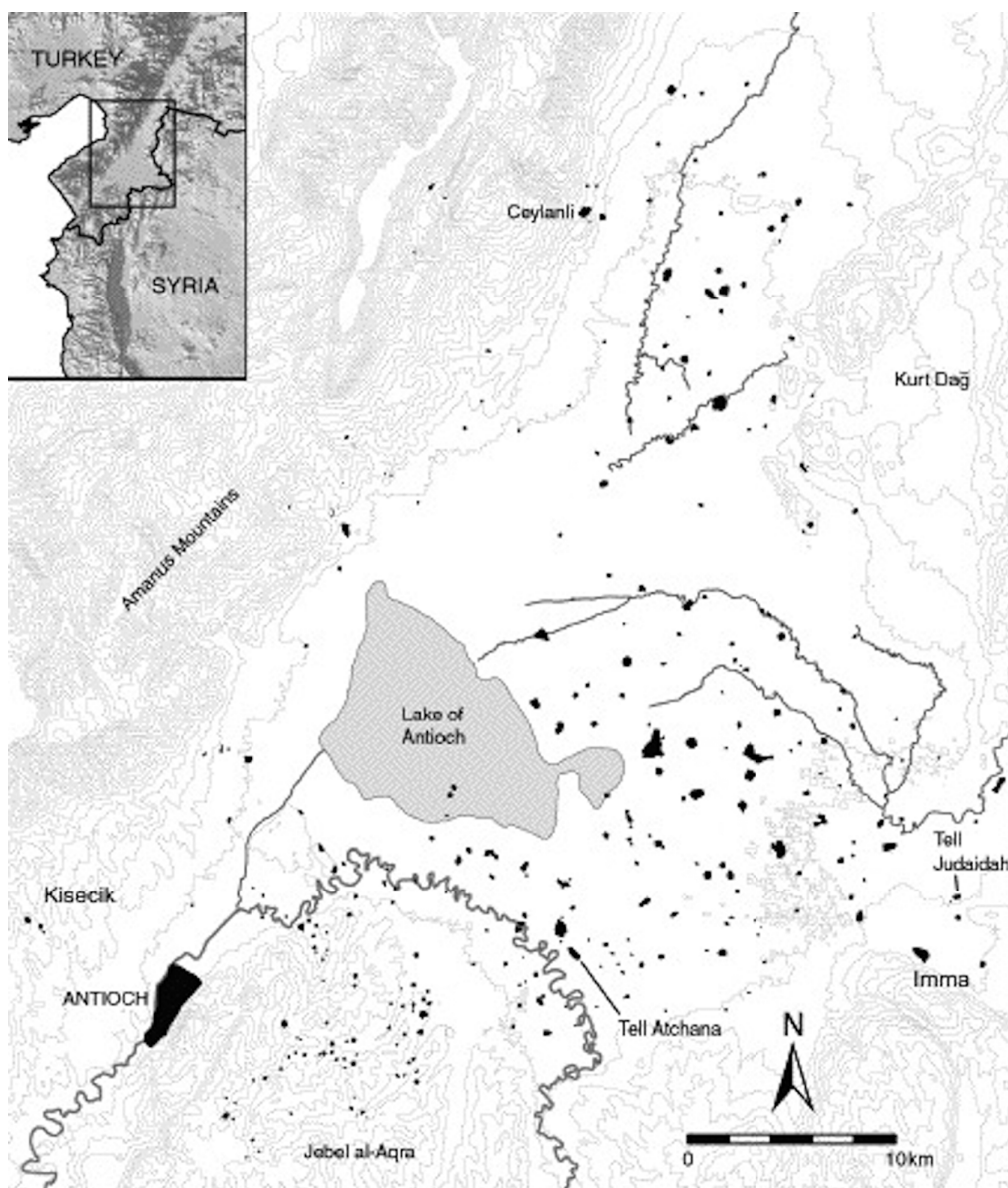
Another important aspect of the AVRП was the documentation of sites that had been plundered or that were in the process of being destroyed; in a region like the Amuq, where mechanical farming seizes new land on a daily basis, the project succeeded in documenting sites that will soon disappear (Figure 1.4).

Through this in-depth study of the environmental setting, the AVRП survey sought to delineate the processes of landscape transformations and how these affected human settlement;³⁸ in so doing, it provided a 10,000-year environmental framework that underpins past and future archaeological research in the region.³⁹ Now, regarding pre-historic eras, the sequence can hardly be broken down to a phase by phase scheme. The adoption of a diachronic approach thus seems to be sensible since it aims to analyze broad trends in the development of the settled landscape over time (Figure 1.5).⁴⁰ For the classical period and successive epochs, however, the assessment is somewhat easier since both the corpora of comparable ceramics from various sites in the Greek and Islamic East and the substantial architectural remains of known date allow for more precise dating.

The system of site numbering consists of the original Braidwood series, revisited by the AVRП in the years 1995–1999, thus comprising sites between 1 and 178. Nevertheless, some areas that were within the limits of the French Mandate administrative area in 1936 are now under the jurisdiction of modern Syria and could not be surveyed by the AVRП team. Moreover, from its onset the project encountered difficulties in identifying certain sites that Braidwood had investigated; these were essentially due to modern development and topographic discrepancies



1.4. Altın Tepe, a small mound (AS 177) in the vicinity of Tell Judeidah as it was being destroyed



1.5. The Amuq Valley Regional Survey and the diachronic documentation of settlement

between the 1:25,000 topographic maps of today and the cartography used by the surveyors in the 1930s.

In 2000, Tony Wilkinson opted for a different, more systematic approach toward the Amuq Valley landscape.⁴¹ Drawing from the environmental data and the aggregate archaeological evidence collected in the previous years, he devised a strategy that enabled the project to investigate areas in the plain where low-profile sites might have been missed. At the same time,

he moved the pendulum toward the highlands of the Amanus Mountains and the Jibāl to the East of Antioch, areas discovered/known to have been in use during the Roman occupation. At this juncture, however, it was clear that human settlement in the plain followed trajectories that were not consonant with those on the highlands; settlement in the late Iron Age shifted from the network of cities in the plain to a system of dispersed, isolated farms that began in the Early Hellenistic period and that subsequently expanded in Roman times in relation to Antioch's demand for supplies.

Survey in this phase was thus intended to provide a more solid interpretative framework for the Roman landscape and to elucidate the processes whereby changes in settlement occurred. Again, once it was accepted that settlement patterns in the Bronze and Iron Age were drastically different from those in the Hellenistic and Early Roman times, it was necessary to trace the trajectory that join the two.⁴² A more problem-oriented investigation directed the survey of the plain, moving toward the periphery and including the highlands to the East and West.

3 TCHALENKO AND THE DEAD CITIES

Let's return now to the Amuq Valley of the 1930s. In the fall of 1936, we encounter Georges Tchalenko on the so-called Dead Cities of the Syrian Jibāl, a stark limestone massif lying some 70 km east/southeast of Antioch, now located in the territory of modern Syria to the southeast of Antioch. Working under the auspices of the French Institute in Damascus and the French Service of Antiquities in Syria and Lebanon then directed by Henry Seyrig, Tchalenko had just inaugurated an ambitious restoration project of the church of Qalblozeh. Much support both in the undertaking of fieldwork and later for publishing came from Jean Lassus, best known as one of the engines behind the Antioch Excavations, and an acute scholar of early Christian architecture. Charles Rufus Morey, the Chair of the Antioch committee, minced no words about Lassus in his yearly assessment of the personnel: "A mercuric Frenchman from the South, energetic and capable, his opinion of his own abilities and his value to the excavation does not suffer from any false modesty."⁴³

At its inception in 1936, Tchalenko's project intended to study and restore churches and religious buildings in northern Syria in an effort to provide a historical narrative for the so-called Dead Cities situated on the limestone hills between Antioch, Apamea, and Aleppo. Yet, distracted by a most stunning network of trails, petrified villages, and surrounding *paysage*, Tchalenko deviated from his original targets and over three years of research

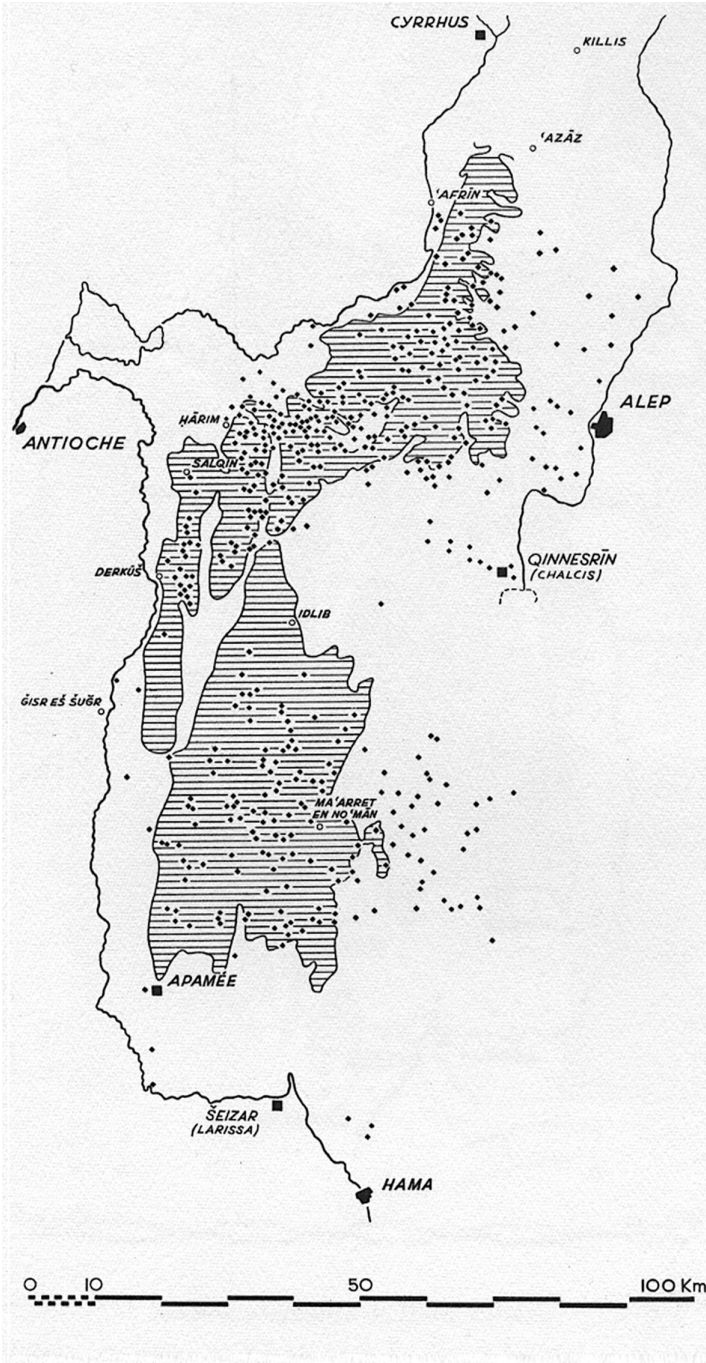
wound up investigating approximately 450 sites ranging from the second to the seventh centuries CE (Figure 1.6).⁴⁴ He subsequently incorporated the numerous beautifully preserved villages of the Jibāl into a detailed regional study: the outcome was a monumental three volume publication that comprised a thorough catalog of sites, the description of their architectural configuration, as well as an important corpus of inscriptions ranging from the late first century CE into the Early Islamic era curated by Henri Seyrig.⁴⁵

The limits of the limestone massif thus became the natural borders of Tchalenko's survey area, and no attempt was made to reconcile the evidence of the highlands with that of adjacent plains. The turmoil that stirred villages like Reyhanlı (ancient Imma) near the Jibāl, populated both by Arabs and Turks in 1938, may have suggested prudence, and confined Tchalenko's itinerary to the limestone massif. Plausible though this perspective may be, we should keep in mind that the well-known map that illustrates the spreading of villages on the Jibāl presents a floating reality, as it were, disconnected by the settlement dynamics in the rest of Antioch's territory, and I shall take this problem up again in successive chapters.

As with Braidwood, Tchalenko's survey followed a specific research trajectory that essentially consisted in targeting monumental buildings that were part of the Syrian religious landscape during the early Christian era.⁴⁶ In so doing, most of the isolated, small farms and hamlets were neglected. Although detached from the main villages, these were a critical component of this landscape. Nor were sites consisting of simple pottery scatters included in the study, for they seemingly lacked what Tchalenko deemed the fundamental criterion of investigation: standing, monumental architecture.⁴⁷

It must be conceded, however, that the study of these monumental sites was not exclusively restricted to the spatial and structural analysis of a single building; tangentially, their rural and economic contexts also became part of the narrative. Tchalenko thus unwittingly produced an economic history of the Roman Massif Calcaire. Although controversial and occasionally simplistic,⁴⁸ this study offers fundamental insights on the settlement patterns at work in the Amuq Valley, as we shall see in Chapter 4. We shall see that the two regions are dynamically linked; this is especially evident when one considers that the Jabal al-ʿAkra, to the southeast of Antioch, is the northernmost extension of the complex, undulating pattern of limestone hills that form the reliefs that Tchalenko surveyed.

Though often difficult to navigate, the enormous body of data still offers rewarding insights; of particular interest is the archaeological information that Tchalenko retrieved from the Jabal Barīša, Jabal al-ʿAʿla, and Jabal Dueili-Wastāni, limestone systems that border the Amuq Valley to the southeast and



1.6. Settlement on the Massif Calcaire during Late Antiquity as documented by Tchalenko

that essentially radiate from the Jabal Zāwiye to the south. According to Tchalenko, these regions witnessed intense settlement and general economic prosperity between the second and the seventh centuries CE, essentially by means of the far-flung commerce of olive oil, which he believed to be the economic mainstay of the region. Advocating a system based on monoculture that continued for five centuries, he emphasized the ability of the communities on the Jibāl to produce olive oil on an industrial scale for exports reaching as far as Rome and Constantinople. While arguing for this scheme, he discounted a broad spectrum of economic options including animal husbandry, mixed agricultural regimes, and various cash crops, which will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.⁴⁹

Although the main economic conclusions of his work may have been challenged, most scholars are quite comfortable with Tchalenko's settlement patterning on the limestone uplands and with his assessment of these communities' ability to successfully exploit the scanty resources of the region and thereby thrive in the aftermath of the alleged third century crisis.⁵⁰ Liebeschuetz, in his thorough history of Late Antique Antioch amply relied on the evidence offered by Tchalenko's survey to argue for the economic and demographic growth of the region starting in the second century CE.⁵¹ In particular, he underscored that the diffusion of small scale farms, each with its own olive press, was indicative of the growth of an independent peasantry whose wealth rested in the olive industry and in the acquisition of land hitherto left abandoned or exploited solely for grazing.

One important ramification of Tchalenko's work is that he recorded a landscape whose features are strikingly at odds with Libanius' account of Antioch's territory and that was chronically affected by heavy exactions, abuses of all kinds, and deserted lands.⁵² Far from being entirely wrong or deceptive, Libanius simply tells one side of the story; indeed, his treatment of facts often simply aimed to create an artificial corollary for his orations.⁵³

By engaging these problems, my study integrates the region of the Jibāl in the larger territory of Antioch. When it comes to the analysis of the settlement patterning on the limestone hills of northern Syria, the traditional scholarship views the region as a cluster of villages and estates detached from urban systems that essentially built its economy on olive oil production. One argument that this study will put forth is that, in reality, the economic landscape of the Dead Cities is a by-product of the town and country economy of Roman Antioch. In this perspective, a key problem that this study will address is one that stems from Tchalenko's survey: to identify the factors that accounted for the economic growth in this region. What mechanisms led to the intensification of settlement in the second century CE? In what ways is the economy of Antioch accountable for the socioeconomic phenomena at play in regions apparently

disjointed from the town and country nucleus? Ultimately, how far did the territory of Antioch extend?

4 EXCAVATIONS IN ANTIOCH

On March 4, 1932, George W. Elderkin officially commenced the Antioch excavations on behalf of a committee that included Princeton University, the Musées de France and a number of other minor stakeholders, among which were the Worcester Art Museum, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and the Fogg Museum of Art.⁵⁴ Chair of the Committee for the Excavations of Antioch and its Vicinity was Charles Rufus Morey, then art history professor at Princeton. The roster of archaeologists included: George W. Elderkin as director, Clarence Fisher as field director, William Campbell, assistant field director. By 1933, Campbell became field director, assisted by Jean Lassus (Figure 1.7).

To this day, the assessment of the 1932–1939 operations generates a mix of responses from pining over the missed opportunity to downright criticism. Emblematic in this sense are the words of Glenn Bowersock, who briskly remarked that Glanville Downey’s monumental “History of Antioch” could have been equally written without the 1930s excavations.⁵⁵ Even the actors in the field, all scholars of the highest order, were not slow in realizing that Antioch was more layered and complex than they had anticipated. Lassus’



1.7. Great Expectations: a 1933 group photo of the Antioch Expedition with the “Thorn-puller (*Spinario*)” in the foreground

preface to his report “Antioch V. Les Portiques d’Antioche” is a heartfelt and altogether lucid account of the herculean tasks that these archaeologists took up, and it conveys the excitement and determination of those days. Yet, a sense of malaise pervades the text throughout.⁵⁶ According to Lassus, the extraordinarily deep sediments that buried the city, combined with devastating torrential rains that greatly hindered the inspection of the *cardo* in 1938, were two main factors that indeed crippled the expedition. An array of other causes, from the quarry-type treatment that Antioch had to endure for centuries, to the presence of a high water table that often would bury the Early Roman and Seleucid exposures are mentioned in passing. But, aside from episodic downturns and shortcomings, Lassus recognizes with much honesty that a plethora of problems, from record-keeping to the on-site management of the operations, had negatively affected the operations from the very outset.

The expedition’s discovery of hundreds of mosaics (close to 300) at Antioch, Daphne, and Seleucia Pieria, of course, may suggest a different narrative to some. The opulence of their décor, the intricate patterns of their *rincaux*, and ultimately, the vibrancy of the stories that they illustrate invariably leave gazers in awe. *The Judgment of Paris*, now at the Louvre, to name but one, is a stunning example of the exquisite Antiochene craftsmanship that by the late second century CE had already established its visual conventions, and arguably had no equal anywhere in Syria or beyond (Figure 1.8).⁵⁷ But, for all their beauty, we should bear in mind that most – if not all – pavements were lifted without adequate consideration and description of their original physical and cultural settings, let alone of the surrounding topography. Now elevated to the status of *objets d’art*, these mosaics both dazzle and confound their viewers from museum and collection halls worldwide, challenging the reconstruction of ancient domestic environments and patronage.⁵⁸

Regrettable though the loss of the archaeological context is, no damage was greater than the later dispersion of the collection. The hasty, almost door-to-door sale of these masterpieces in the aftermath of WWII brought to an end the activities of the Antioch committee, and a long season of massive shipments of artifacts and *partage* agreements.

It is fair to say that an unfortunate aura loomed over the project from its very first season. The lukewarm appraisal of the 1932 operations (which were overall productive, bringing to light the *Atrium House*, three baths, a hippodrome, a stadium, and a modest church at Daphne), as written by Elderkin in his end-of-the-year report, goes to great lengths in showing the disquiet of the archaeologists, led to confront archaeological realities that they had not anticipated. “The expedition lacked the advantage of previous soundings of the site,” he comments.⁵⁹ Clearly, none of them knew the site firsthand, nor what they would be up against.



1.8. The Judgment of Paris (Musée du Louvre)

Yet, much scholarly enthusiasm and generous donations had augured well for the carrying out of activities in Antakya. As early as 1927, when rumors of the forthcoming expedition had started to spread around, Morey had already received a chorus of encouragement and support from the most authoritative voices of the day: René Dussaud, Michael Rostovtzeff, and Lesley T. Shear, among others, recommended the project without hesitation.⁶⁰ Therefore, by 1929 Morey was poised to begin the excavations that in everyone's opinion were to change the perspective on the Greek East in fundamental ways. To that end, an ambitious outline of goals had already been drafted, thanks in part to the zest of Dana Munro, then professor of history at Princeton and Chair of the advisory board at the American Council of Learned Societies, who never failed to encourage Morley above and beyond any measure.

Yet, we should consider Morey's background and motives as he began crafting the project. To be sure, he was a novice in fieldwork, and had diverse interests that ranged from the visual culture of Roman sarcophagi to early medieval art. Yet, the role of the Greek orient in shaping post-classical

aesthetics was an interest that increasingly took the upper-hand both in his research and teaching at Princeton.⁶¹ It is hard to gauge to what extent Antioch had been on his radar prior to the momentous days of 1927. The truth is that Morey's stint on Howard C. Butler's excavation at Sardis put him in closer contact with the scholar who had just completed a seminal archaeological survey of Syria.⁶² This opportunity greatly impacted his scholarly outlook, and opened to him a new, exciting universe of cultures and visual idioms. More fundamentally, we should not discount the intellectual climate that framed the research of Morey and his peers in the mid- to late-20s. McCormick Hall on the Princeton campus was imbued with the spirit of Butler's research and his determination to investigate Antioch some day. At the onset of the planning phase, Morey even contemplated naming the excavations "the Howard Crosby Butler Memorial Expedition in Syria." It is no surprise then, that in correspondence with the Princeton President Bryard Dodge, dated December 23rd, 1927, he expressed his interest in Antioch in the following terms: "As you probably know, we have had this project as a dream for some years, but felt that the political conditions were too unsettled in the French Mandate to warrant a serious try at it. Dussaud's apparent invitation sounds as though there would be no objection on the part of the French, but I should like to know also whether there is any prospect of the French continuing in the mandate for a long enough term of years to make sure that we would be dealing with them and not with the Italians or somebody else."⁶³ Though the prospect of a new Mandate to Syria was not realistic, Morey was right in sensing the political volatility of the region. As we shall see, the expedition was going to experience its share of rioting and intimidation during the 1938 campaign, when even an evacuation plan was in store.

All the same, by 1931 the project was basically poised to begin. A permit had been clinched, a *partage* plan with the Musées de France was achieved, and Princeton was to serve as powerhouse for the study of the materials. In Morey's intentions, his other fundamental *Index of Christian Art* project, based at the University was to become the portal to the Antiochene collections. Henry Seyrig, then director of the antiquities for the French Mandate, hailed the concession with much enthusiasm, and commended the Antioch excavation. Of course, he too had great expectations – and a strong personal research interest – in what lay ahead. Thus, despite the blows of the Great Depression and the withdrawal of many pledges for funding, the project commenced in early March 1932.

Arguably, the endemic lack of a rigorous, systematic agenda geared toward the thorough investigation of individual sites is one of the factors that primarily impaired the Princeton project. Moreover, the pressure exerted from the sponsoring institutions for the collection of antiquities was not likely to breed

the kind of deliberative atmosphere of a typical archaeological excavation. Thus, the cherished plan to hunt for the Constantinian Octagon and the Forum of Valens, among other foci, wound up conflating with random digs driven either by serendipitous discoveries or villagers' leads to mosaics. Also, the project would seldom seize opportunities offered by the implementation of new developments in Antakya or by the demolition of old buildings, as in the case of French barracks of the 28th Esquadille on the northwestern corner of the modern town in 1932, or the Khan Şari Mahmoud (24 K in the Princeton excavation grid, see Figure 2. 2) in the vicinity of the Daphne Gate during the spring of 1934. This resulting whirlwind of small digs and trenches considerably sidetracked the archaeologists, and much uncertainty about the evidence excavated resonates in the excavations reports.

For all of its shortcomings, however, this *modus operandi* also produced a wealth of archaeological data from the environs of Antioch. The excavations at Narlica, Daphne, and Seleucia, though limited in character, can cast some light on questions of space use, and integration of the hinterlands as we shall see in the following chapters.

Altogether, the first season of 1932 epitomizes the trajectory that the expedition was to pursue in the next seven years.⁶⁴ With a frenzy of investigations taking place on the Island under the direction of Fischer and Campbell (Figure 1.9), Glanville Downey began investigating an edifice outside of Daphne, on account of numerous column-shafts sticking out of the ground hinting at the possible presence of a temple of the classical age. The evidence



1.9. The excavation of the *Atrium House*'s triclinium: the *Drinking Contest* and *Judgment of Paris* mosaics

that turned up, however, brought to light no trace of Daphne's florid pagan past. To the disappointment of the expedition, a small church with a modest decorative apparatus – and no identifier – came to light.⁶⁵ The seemingly unpromising excavation of the church was terminated at the end of the campaign, and other apparently unfruitful sites were rapidly jettisoned in the successive seasons. This costly pattern, in short, became the signature of the expedition, as the unfolding of the excavations made manifest. Sensible and rigorous investigations of select sectors, as for instance the so-called main street-digs along the thoroughfare were paired up with sudden forays in orchards and fields, with consequent mobilization of excavation means and work-force, which at that point varied between 68 and 437 individuals.

Land-use negotiations didn't help the expedition either. The leasing of the land more often than not precluded the enlargement of the excavation, and expropriations were difficult to achieve. Campbell learned the lesson the hard way: his autopsy of "Hippodrome A" had to reckon with the whims of local landowners, and his attempts to glean connections between the building and the temple within the context of the palatial setting were foiled by continuous, inopportune bargaining. Similarly, the exploration of Daphne's theater was interrupted abruptly in 1935 for failure to expropriate the land. The list of projects scuttled by such obstacles may go on, but the topic lies beyond the scope of this book.

This brief account illustrates the vicissitudes and errors that affected the productivity of the Antioch group; yet, other factors got in the way of the Antioch archaeologists. As mentioned earlier, the spring of 1938 witnessed a dramatic crescendo in the Sanjak's political debate, and isolated bouts of violence soon turned into urban riots. Clashes between Turks and Arabs – with the latter backed up by Armenians and Greeks – became more and more the norm in the city and surrounding villages during the month of May. The heading of the excavation diary for May 31st reads, "More rioting and casualties." In it, one finds no account of the antiquities, but rather a somber chronicle of events in a region that the French were handing over to the Turks, regardless of their being an ethnic minority. The Antioch Committee of course took no sides as the situation evolved, and their concerns were solely restricted to personal safety, the fulfillment of their contractual obligations, and the integrity of the collections. To that end, the Department of State remained in close contact – via Morey – with the folks in Antakya, and made recommendations in case the situation worsened. And it did, in fact, get worse, as the June field report reads: "... Civil disturbances became so serious that it seemed advisable to confine work areas near the field headquarters; and so, the excavation was resumed along the Main Street and in 13 R. By June 6th the political situation seemed so grave that an emergency division was held and the Staff sent to Beirut. Then followed the difficult period of evacuating

the antiquities to Beirut where the haven kindly granted by President Dodge of the American University proved a god-send.”⁶⁶

As befits good commanders, Campbell and Lassus remained in Antakya, and were able to resume the activities in earnest, albeit on a much smaller scale: Bath F (13 R) and the Doric temple at Seleucia Pieria were the main targets. Despite a tangible atmosphere of dismantling, the project continued into 1939, when various sites were inspected on the Aleppo road, 13 R, and 15 M, an effort to locate the east-west axis of the city that proved unsuccessful. At Daphne, more mosaics were lifted, while the dig at Seleucia brought to light a most stunning Martyrion. The excavation of this building also represented in very dignified fashion the end of the activities by the Antioch Committee. At that juncture, the project had lost its remaining stamina. But, more importantly, a greater conflict was pending over Europe, and the members of the expedition either went back to their homes or served in the Army. Only in the 1960s did Campbell contemplate the possibility of returning to Antioch, as he confessed to Lassus, but his death cut short any plans.⁶⁷

CHAPTER TWO

FOUNDATION AND GROWTH OF THE CITY

In this chapter I highlight the foundation and growth of Antioch; in particular, I am interested in the planning strategies and building traditions that coalesced in the establishment of the city on the Orontes. How the Seleucid armature sustained centuries of urban modifications and forged an aesthetic legacy that pervaded the built environment for centuries is precisely the object of my examination. I am also interested in showing how this framework, by the time of the Early Roman empire, could hardly contain a swollen community. The city bypassed the walls and the trappings of the Seleucid city plan by means of a dense settlement system in the countryside. How this process redefined Antioch and superseded the logic of the initial foundation will be analyzed in the subsequent chapters.

I TOPONYMS AND A RIVER

Ἀντιόχεια ἐπὶ Δάφνῃ, Ἀντιόχεια πρὸς Δάφνῃ, Ἀντιόχεια ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὀρόντου: these are three variants of Antioch's nomenclature during the Hellenistic and Roman epochs.¹ In antiquity, toponyms were not chosen at random. More often than not they reflected collective perspectives of communities, their ability to navigate space, and ultimately a world-view. "Toponymy is the spatialization of collective knowledge, the key to which is sometimes lost," writes Christian Jacob;² for Antioch, these designations were widely in use between the second century BCE and the third century CE in the epigraphic,

numismatic, and textual record. Altogether, they primarily served to single out the Syrian city from the fifteen other Seleucid Antioch's scattered about the eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamia.³ Yet, more subtly, they emphasized Antioch's focal points. An ancestral cult and a body of water served to identify Antioch for centuries, both locally and elsewhere.

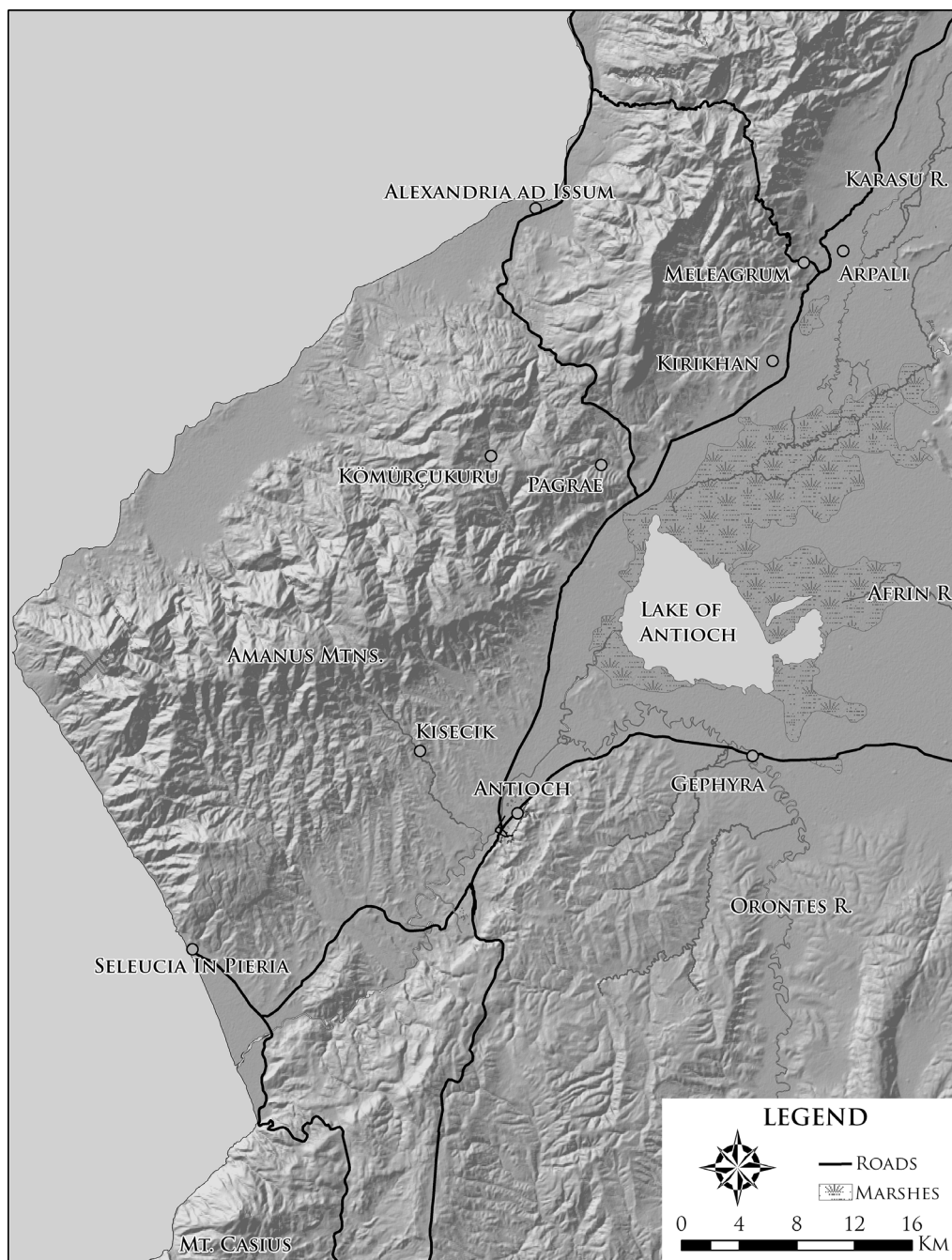
In the early fifth century CE, at a time when Antioch could hardly be confused with her namesakes, Ephesos set up a statue to celebrate Nonnos, proconsul of Asia and native of Antioch.⁴ As the fulsome text reads, the city of Antiochos and the beautiful Orontes had reared Nonnos, paving the way for his political excellence. Little did it matter to readers, however, that in actuality Antioch was not exactly the city of Antiochos; truth be told, the anonymous writer who penned the encomium was not alone in failing to recognize Seleukos Nikator as founder. Eusebius, among others, testifies to the popularity of this false identification, when he emphatically called Antioch "the city of Antiochos."⁵ What is more, in the early months of AD 363 the emperor Julian published the *Misopogon*. In it is a well-known attack on Antioch's citizenry:

... Now since this was the conduct of Antiochus, I have no right to be angry with his descendants when they emulate their founder or him who gave his name to the city . . .⁶

Julian's invective needs sharper focus here. It seems that the Seleucid king Antiochos had apparently bequeathed his lurid, incestuous practices to the Antiochenes. Contempt and resentment coalesce in a Philippic that lashed out at the Antiochene community for their charade of St. Babylas' bones removal, bent for lampoons, and ultimately lukewarm reception.⁷ It is plain though that behind the vehemence of Julian's allegation lies the evidence of a city that as late as the fourth century CE still recognized and boasted of its Seleucid past. Who these Seleucid agencies were and what project they had in mind when they first established Antioch's perimeter are the questions at issue.

2 MYTHS AND THE TETRAPOLIS

No ancient city was immune from the elaboration of intricate and often contradictory foundation myths. Antioch is no exception; its accounts provide a rich redress for the paucity of archaeological data, and by conflating complicated narratives it sought to bolster claims to a heroic past. The sample of legends is broad:⁸ Kasos and Belos, sons of the Argive king Inachos were allegedly the first to settle in the area of the ancient city, according to a myth reported by the *Chronographia* of George Synchronos.⁹ Strabo, however, contends that Triptolemos, in his search for Io, had a hand in the founding of the city. Festivals held in his honor on Mt. Casius attest to a quasi-eponymous hero cult.¹⁰ Orestes and Herakles weren't spared either from this mesh of narratives. According to legend he founded the settlement of Heraklea, later to become



MAP 3. The Amanus Mt.

Daphne.¹¹ In a more matter-of-fact fashion, Libanius subscribed to a foundation inspired by Alexander the Great himself:¹² the site of Alexandria by Issos (Alexandretta, modern Iskenderun, in all likelihood founded by the Macedonian, Map 3) was near enough to legitimize the tale, it seems.

Naturally, the multi-layered communities of classical and late antique Antioch could only have descended from a wide array of forebears. Each of these narratives contained kernels of truth and personal spin in equal amounts. How Antioch eventually proceeded to build a durable, visual rhetoric of these chronologically distant tales will be charted in the successive chapters. For now, we may turn our attention to the archaeology of Antioch's foundation and bring into focus two of its fundamental aspects.

First, the foundation of Antioch was part of a far greater project that had entailed the establishing of a web of new urban foci.¹³ Royal capitals, cities, colonies, and garrisons were the instruments for the realization of the grand geopolitical plan that the Seleucid kings mapped out in the late fourth and early third centuries BCE. As with other colonies and garrisons inaugurated by Seleukos Nikator, the army in all likelihood provided surveying skills and, fundamentally, the labor.¹⁴ The large consortium of Macedonians, Athenians, Argives, Cretans, Euboeans, Jews, and Syrians that formed the backbone of the Seleucid legions in the campaigns between 306 and 300 BCE seemingly served in the initial construction of Antioch as well as the other three cities that formed the *Tetrapolis*: two inland (Antioch and Apamea) and two seaports (Laodikeia and Seleucia in Pieria).¹⁵

Extensive archaeological surveys conducted in northern Syria during the 1980s corroborate the picture of widespread settlements. More to the point, archaeological reconnaissance in the upper Euphrates and Tigris basins, in particular, bring into focus the sparse character of the Hellenistic settlement that grew in synch with the establishment of colonies at Zeugma, Seleucia on the Euphrates, Hierapolis, and Nisibis, to name but a few.¹⁶ Thus, it now appears that the dissemination of small nucleations in southeastern Anatolia and Mesopotamia was brought about by institutional schemes, consisting of the allocation of parcels of land (*kleroi*) to the military. This phenomenon led to the realization of a self-governing peasantry that slowly became the backbone of the Seleucid state, thanks to the revenues it would generate as well as the associated military obligations. All in all, in a climate of clear and present danger, when the threat from the Ptolemies became increasingly tangible and Demetrios Poliorketes' expansion schemes were a concrete threat, Seleukos resorted to the system he knew best: the founding of cities, many of which carried dynastic denominations.¹⁷ In particular, the foundation of the *Tetrapolis* was instrumental in asserting Seleucid hegemony in a key region of North Syria, the *Seleucis*, a large corridor between the coast and the Euphrates that was the trait d'union between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean. This ambitious undertaking was brought to completion rather quickly thanks to the frenzy of building activities that had begun a few years earlier with Seleukos' most impressive endeavor: the foundation of Seleucia on Tigris, sometime around 306 BCE, shortly after Seleukos' assumption of the throne.

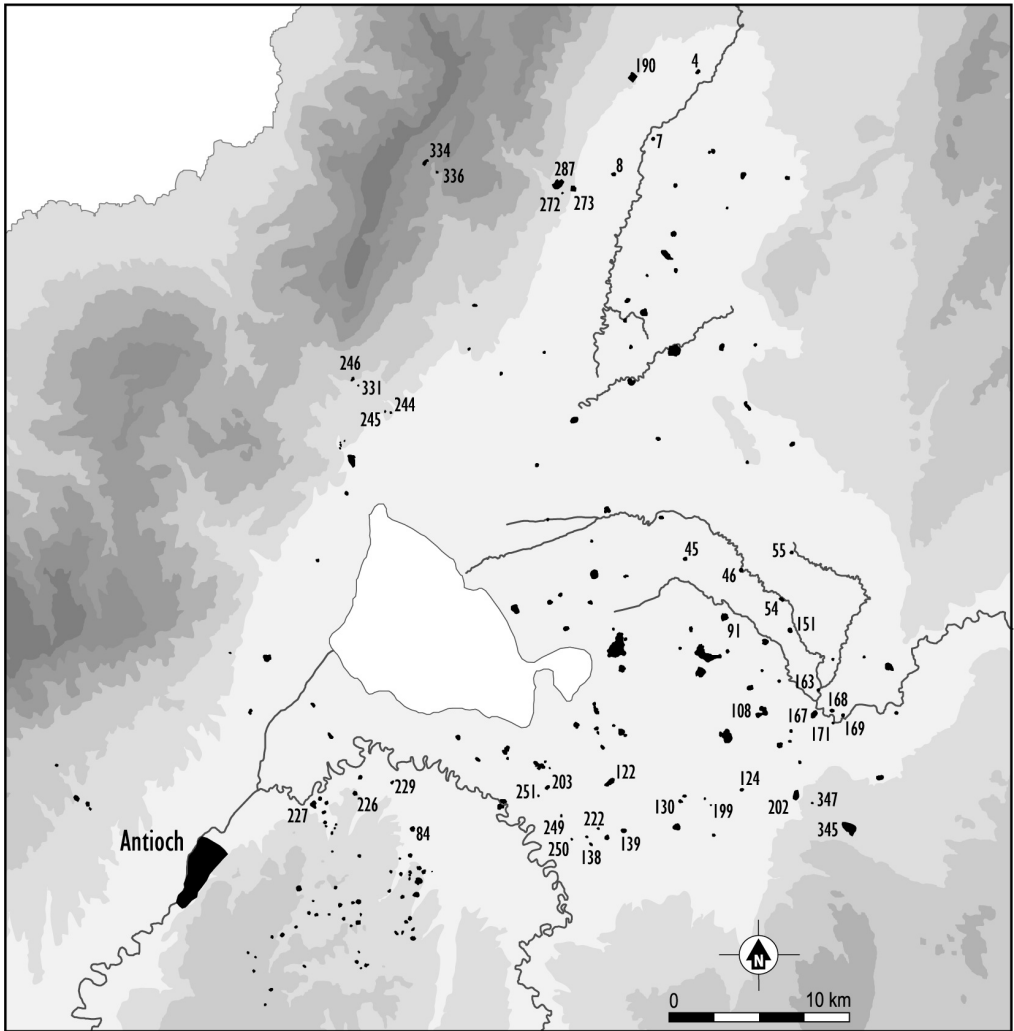
Secondly, and more importantly, at its foundation Antioch was anything but a blank canvas; rather, it emerged from a distinct cultural setting, which had accommodated for centuries a number of communities straddling the slopes of Mt. Staurin and Silpios, not to mention the Amuq Plain. During the 1937 Princeton excavation of the nymphaeum (“Street Dig” 17 O, Figure 2.2), an elusive cuneiform-inscribed clay tablet turned up, buried in layers that Lassus recognized as Hellenistic.¹⁸ This should not be taken as a merely serendipitous find. Of probable neo-Assyrian origin, it boasts the commissioning of a mud-brick edifice. No find could be more exemplary as we begin a narrative of building programs that played out on these grounds for millennia.

According to Greek sources the villages of Bottia, Iopolis, Heraklea, and Kasiotis foreshadowed Antioch’s foundation. Read together, these accounts point in the direction of a landscape that had been vibrant long before the arrival of the Macedonians.¹⁹ The Seleucid foundation of Antioch was woven into a landscape that had functioned as hinge between the Mediterranean and northern Mesopotamia for millennia.

The plain of Antioch (Amuq Plain) is the locus of an impressive mesh of sites that date from the Chalcolithic era down to the Ottoman age (Figure 2.1).

The settlement systems of the Late Bronze Age–Early Iron Age with their interconnected locales, trade routes and canals were instrumental in building the armature that underpinned the urbanism of later epochs. The Kingdom of Alalakh in the Late Bronze Age, in particular, is a good case in point. The seminal excavations conducted by Sir Leonard Woolley in the 1930s at the site of Tell Atchana, some 20 miles northeast of Antioch following the road to Aleppo, were key to unraveling parts of Alalakh’s sacred architecture, including parts of one palace of the second millennium BCE. Importantly, these excavations yielded caches of cuneiform texts, most of which date to circa 1600 BCE and record a dominant Hurrian culture substantially colored by Canaanite accents.²⁰

The region’s crossroads character and permeability by other cultures continued well into the Iron Age: recent textual and archaeological evidence from the nearby site of Tell Tayinat (ancient Kunulua) attests the political tensions of the early seventh century, with the rise of the Anatolian powers, the divided kingdom of Israel and the consolidation of Assyria. The archaeological investigation at the site is now bringing to light the riches of the neo-Hittite kingdom of Patina (1000–738 BCE) as attested by the uncovering of the magnificent statue of king Suppiluliuma in 2012.²¹ Talmudic tradition, however, held the cities of Hamath and Ribla to be predecessors of Antioch and its southern suburb Daphne; moreover, these foci were also considered stations of the Babylonian exile.²² Indeed, such a window onto a shared distant past would reinforce the sense of belonging felt by Antioch’s Jews for centuries to come.



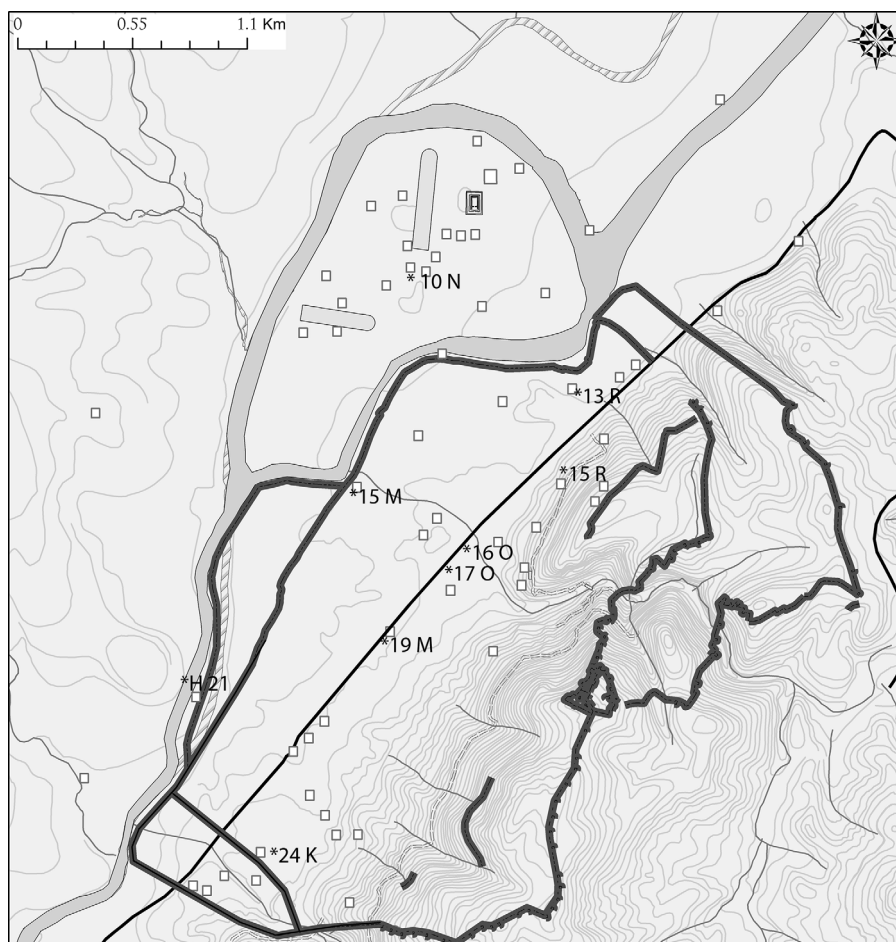
2.1. The Amuq Valley and the uplands, comprising sites recorded by the AVRP between 1995 and 2005

While the archaeological record for the Persian period and the archaic era is still a matter of dispute, it is nonetheless generally accepted that the Amuq Plain and the Orontes Valley increasingly served to connect the Levantine peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean world. Even the finds at Tell Mina on the Mediterranean coast, six miles south of the Orontes delta reverberate with the fusion of these cultures.²³ What lies behind the establishment of this trading post is still a matter of dispute; but it appears that its rise to prominence was related to the overall increase of settlement density in the region. Without any doubt, by the time the Seleucid surveyors reached the region during the last decade of the fourth century BCE, a constellation of diverse communities was already in place.

3 THE FOUNDATION

According to legend, on the 22nd of Artemisius (the month of May) of the year 300 BCE, a month after having founded Seleucia Pieria, Seleukos Nikator founded Antioch in the first hour of the day. Honoring the memory of Seleukos' deceased father Antiochos,²⁴ the city was built on a complicated site between the Orontes and the slopes of Mt. Silpius (Figure 2.2).²⁵

From the outset, Antioch had to cope with seasonally torrential streams, and primarily the Parmenios and, to a lesser degree, the Firminus. Their seasonal runoff affected the southeastern boroughs and the whole of the Orontes' left bank. Justinian's so-called Iron Gate with its successive overhauls is testimony to these environmental pressures as well as to the resilience of the Antiochenes. Planted deep in the gorge between Mt. Silpius and Mt. Staurin, it served both as gate and dam, and was the city's last grand effort to curb the vexations caused by these erratic waters (Figure 2.3).²⁶



2.2. Antioch: the walls, known features, and the sites of the 1930s excavations

The Orontes was the foundation's fulcrum. *Beautiful*, as the dedication to Nonnos reads, and indeed complicated. The river in many ways represented Antioch, as attested by the ancient textual and visual culture. In its upper valley it skirts sites known through Egyptian and Assyrian records like Kadesh, Hamath, and Zinzar. It boasts quite an array of names: Axios (in the vicinity of Apamea), Drakon, Typhon, Ophites in classical antiquity²⁷ and Nahr al-'Asī, Asi Nehri in Islamic, Ottoman and modern times. Al Maklûb, however, is the telling nomenclature of the Islamic period, used by Idrīsī and Yâkût: "the Overturned," that is the river that awkwardly flows south to north.²⁸ Its mythical name Orontes, however, may derive from that of an Indian prince who had the gall to face the god Dionysus as he traveled through the East. The *Dyonisiaca* of

Nonnos makes it plain that, defeated by the god, the young and fierce Orontes committed suicide and disappeared in the waters of the river.²⁹

Almost 600 km long, its springs are located deep in the heart of Syria not far from Tell Nemi Mend (Laodicea ad Libanum) and Baalbek; it rises near Hermel where it receives the Ain Zarqa runoff. After watering the Biqa' Valley it bends decisively westward at the crossing of Gephyra, modern Demirköprü, and reaches Antioch by a somewhat tortuous course. In 74 CE as part of the implementation of the military harbor in Seleucia Pieria, drastic canalization carried out by Vespasian and the governor of Syria M. Ulpius Traianus, improved the navigability of the stretch between the point where the waters of the Orontes merged with those of the small Orontes and Küçükalyan Köyü (few hundred meters north of the Island), where the stone that commemorates the achievement was recovered.³⁰ Forming an Island (no longer visible) upon entering the city, the Orontes continued its course southwest skirting the Daphne plateau on its western flank. It received water from the Büyük and Küçük Cay, known as Melas in antiquity, two small tributaries originating in the Jebel Moussa. Successively, it reached the slopes of Mons Admirabilis and Mt. Casius, an area that witnessed a proliferation of monasteries from the Byzantine age onward, as attested by the sanctuary of St. Simeon the Younger, and the many Georgian, Armenian and Latin establishments of the middle Byzantine period.³¹ Finally, it discharged its waters into the Mediterranean south of Seleucia Pieria.



2.3. The Iron Gate



2.4. Remains of a Noria and installation in northern Antakya

The river impacted the urbanization of the valley positively for millennia; no floods, no matter how violent – as in the words of Sidonius Apollinaris³² – could hinder the role of the Orontes as catalyst for water-powered activities; to this day, the river is still punctuated by *norias* (water-mills) that bears witness to the practical and economic benefits that the Orontes gave to communities nearby (Figure 2.4).³³

Yet, the instability of the river and the various changes that fundamentally affected both its course and its valley in antiquity shaped the Orontes flood plain, a basin that measures approximately 16,000 km. Satellite imagery is particularly effective in highlighting the flood phenomena and the riverbed changes that occurred in antiquity.³⁴

The heyday of the Orontes is long gone. Today often treated as an open-air dump, especially in urban areas near Antakya, its waters are largely pumped out to irrigate cotton plantations on the plain, while a system of dams along its upper course in Syria drastically reduces the inflow. Its floods, however, also accounted for the formation of the lake of Antioch around the early first millennium BCE, as we shall see in Chapter 4. To this day, the river can still pose a threat to the communities in the Amuq Valley, as proven by a disastrous inundation in 2003: the banks overflowed and tells looked like islands in the sea. Generally, in the months of August through October, however, the river is at low flow, as opposed to the remainder of the year when the level of water essentially depends on precipitation.³⁵

The Orontes tried the prosperity of the city time and again, and its erratic and flood-prone character led to a string of calamities over the centuries, resulting in vast tracts of the ancient city lying under more than 10 m of alluvial debris and sediment. The ninth century Persian historian al-Baladhuri made much of the dangers posed by the river's floods; it was known in those days as "Al-Asi," the rebel.

The river's twists and turns produced a remarkable small Island at the junction between the Amuq Plain and the rolling hills of the Jabal al-'Aqra. That was ultimately confirmed as Antioch's site of choice by a prodigy. As Seleukos was completing a sacrifice to Zeus after the victory against Antigonos, an eagle appeared from the sky and snatched the sacrificial meat that it dropped in turn at the selected spot. The event is one of the mainstays of Antioch's foundation myths, as reported by Libanius and Malalas. A bronze tetradrachm of the time of Hadrian struck by Antioch depicted the ruler and under, a magnificent eagle firmly holding the limb of a victim.³⁶(Figure 2.5) On the reverse is a seated Tyche, holding two ears of wheat and poppy-head.



2.5. The bronze tetradrachm of Hadrian celebrating Antioch's foundation myth. In it is a visual lamination between the emperor, the Tyche, and the legend of the eagle

The communion between the city and its ancestral symbols with the imperial house could not be more explicit. How Antiochenes viewed this fusion remains to be established.³⁷

But that is not all, for the myth appeared in the visual repertoire of the region in other forms. Remarkable, in this regard, is the stone panel that sheathed a capital found at Bourges-Sleyb, a site in the vicinity of Laodikeia, to be identified with Heraklea by Sea (Figure 2.6).³⁸ What kind of building this relief embellished is impossible to say.



2.6. The relief from Bourges-Sleyb at the Beirut Museum

Nevertheless, some of its features are worth our attention. The style of the composition is rather crude, as shown by the coarse rendering of the male figure's head, and the difficulty of fitting the scene in the space available. Yet the panel's modest execution betrays familiarity with the aesthetic conventions of imperial portraiture and sculpture at large. Interestingly, the relief is permeated with the visual tensions of the Tetrarchic era, suspended as it were between a flattened-out, frontal style and traditional schemes, and a bent for exaggerated proportions. The scene, apparently, captures the moment when Seleukos sacrifices to Zeus and probably inaugurates the foundation of Antioch. The youthful, clean-shaven king wears a cloak and short tunic reminiscent of that of Mithras slaying the bull in countless reliefs and plaques. Fancy parade boots that are frequent in Roman imperial portraits complete his attire. The king holds a patera (a vessel for ritual), and reaches out to an altar to perform a sacrifice. Above the altar is a Victory in the act of crowning the king with a wreath, and holding a palm leaf. A bull

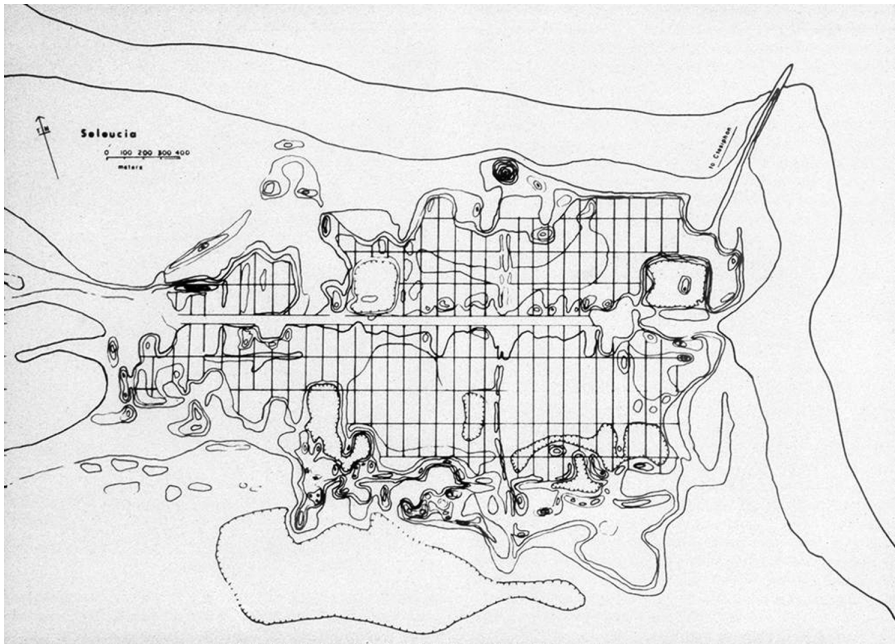
occupies the field between Seleukos and the altar; though awkward, the animal's insertion alludes to the conventions of the *suoveturilia*, a traditional private or public purification rite in Roman religion. Far right is a Tyche, identified by its turrine crown; the treatment of her eyes is suggestive of the visual tradition of the Severan ages and later. She holds a small statue of Apollo playing the lyre. Indeed, in this eclectic ensemble the latter serves to identify the well-known sanctuary near Antioch. Finally, looming over the scene is a weathered eagle, presumably waiting to carry away parts of the victim.

Altogether it can be surmised that this relief celebrates Antioch's foundation myth, although Seyrig noted that it is at variance with the traditional iconography of the Tyche, here identified by Apollo rather than the Orontes.³⁹ The addition of the personified victory seems to draw inspiration from imperial and official reliefs of the third and early fourth centuries CE. Yet these visual departures attest the freedom with which the artist interpreted a legend still deeply ingrained in the landscape of Antioch and the *Tetrapolis*. The late Roman imperial aesthetics of the relief still perpetuated the foundation myth and, not least, increased engagement for the viewer.

4 DISPOSABLE CAPITALS

Antioch was planned – allegedly under the direction of the architect Xenarios⁴⁰ – in a way to seize the potential of the Orontes, between the river and the highway that connected the Mediterranean to the heart of Syria. In so doing the Seleucid surveyors followed a millennial tradition of city planning in the Levant: a city utilizing a river for its defenses and port. In fact, the same military surveyors who commenced work at Antioch had sharpened their urban planning skills only a few years earlier at a conspicuous site in Mesopotamia. If Antioch had a forerunner, it was Seleucia on the Tigris (Figure 2.7), which was conceived by Seleukos Nikator as the capital of Seleucid Babylon, the territory that loosely corresponded to the satrapies of Mesopotamia. As with Antioch, the tracing of the urban design of Seleucia's city cannot be divorced from the adjacent Tigris with the seasonal fluctuations of its course, and the overall ecological setting.

Lying on the Tigris' floodplain some twenty-seven kilometers south of the city of Baghdad, and poised along the Tigris' west bank, around the prominent mound of Tell Omar, Seleucia was one of the largest cities of the classical age.⁴¹ That this is no exaggeration is proven by the archaeological record: at 550 hectares, Seleucia is a powerful demonstration of the scale that a royal capital was supposed to showcase. Pliny's allusion to the city spreading its walls like an eagle still lacks confirmation, but may stress the scale of Seleukos' undertaking at Seleucia.⁴²



2.7. Seleucia on the Tigris: the ground-plan of the Seleucid city

It is remarkable, however, that the poet Lucan had already put his accent on this fundamental similarity between Seleucia and Antioch in a passage of his *Pharsalia*; Antioch and the “New Babylon” were both girded by a conspicuous river.⁴³ Not surprisingly, allusions to regions and their respective rivers also populated the repertoire of local artists, and figure in the visual culture of Antioch and its environs. A late second century CE pavement from Seleucia Pieria with a personification of the Tigris now at the Detroit Institute of Arts is a good example (Figure 2.8).⁴⁴



2.8. The Personification of the Tigris river, House of Cilicia

The pairing of Seleucia with Antioch on environmental and planning grounds is apt because it brings together two almost synchronic realities; in this view, the manner in which the Seleucid capital was set on the Tigris’ western bank can be used to cast light on how Antioch’s city plan was realized.

Seleucia on the Tigris miraculously preserves its original, Seleucid city plan; the American (1927–1937) and Italian (1970–1984) excavations that intermittently investigated the city have shown that Parthian and Sasanian building activities hardly altered Seleucia’s original configuration.⁴⁵ In the



2.9. Seleucia on the Tigris after the Italian investigations

case of Seleucia on the Tigris, aerial photos and satellite imagery still attest to the original grid that formed the city's design (Figure 2.9).

As with other early Seleucid foundations, however, it is likely that the establishment of a capital city at Seleucia had superseded previous occupation. Myth has it that the obscure, ancient city of Opis underlay the new foundation;⁴⁶ material evidence harking back to the neo-Babylonian period (ninth century BCE) suggests that the area was continuously occupied.

How this corner of the Tigris' alluvial plan attracted settlement and the development of complex urban societies first is of interest. A mesh of canals, some of which are of considerable proportions like the Nahr Malka that connected the Tigris and the Euphrates, had long modified this countryside, creating the conditions for intensive agriculture and movements of commerce and communities well beyond the corridor of the riverbed.⁴⁷ The implementation of a very sophisticated irrigation infrastructure played a major role in sustaining the constellation of cities – Choche, Ctesiphon, the Sasanian Veh Ardashir and further upstream at Abassid Baghdad – that was to unfold in the following centuries. It is no coincidence that Arab geographers long referred to this district as Al-Madā'in, “the two cities,” a denomination that lingers to this day.

Seleucia's foundation led to the demise of the ancient capital, Babylon, a city that, with the Seleucids firmly in power, had lost its *raison d'être*;⁴⁸ the new capital made manifest a pragmatic policy whereby former capital cities became “disposable.” We shall see next how in fact Antigoneia was uncere- moniously replaced by Antioch on the Orontes. All in all, Antigoneia and Babylon no longer served their strategic purposes, while also preserving memories of Alexander and Antigonos that the new intelligentsia was happy

to relinquish. Be that as it may, Seleucia's location is worth further analysis. As with the Orontes, the current course of the Tigris has significantly varied through the ages. It is now accepted that it flowed considerably more to the west, thus running adjacent to Seleucia's north-easternmost boroughs.⁴⁹ Here a major harbor served as the city's main commercial hub; it plausibly grew at the junction between the Tigris and the branch of the Royal canal that linked the Euphrates to the Tigris itself, so cutting Seleucia in half along its northwest-southeast axis.⁵⁰ Today, the river's relic course offers a telling snapshot of riverine fluctuations and their impact on the built environment of the urban communities that have successively inhabited this district. The archaeological record of the city shows a distinct pattern of the urban degradation and overall collapse owing to the long-term effects that stagnant waters and the rise of the water table had on mudbrick structures. In southern Mesopotamia where channel technology harks back to the sixth millennium BCE Seleucia ironically had to reckon with the continuous dangers of poor drainage that ultimately caused the rise of water tables. The gradual abandonment of the city in favor of Parthian Ctesiphon, may be due first and foremost to an environmental rather than a political motive.

All the same, in early 306 BCE the Chaldean Magi inaugurated the space to be occupied by Seleucia.⁵¹ In true Mesopotamian fashion, the combination of walls and water was to become the city's principal defensive asset, and this prerogative did not escape Tacitus, who noted that the river functioned as a bulwark.⁵² In so doing, the city plan appropriated a scheme that from time immemorial marked the cityscapes of Mesopotamia since Ur brought it to fruition, exploiting the river and its canal as a system of moats.⁵³

At Seleucia, the surveyors oriented the city along the western shore of the Tigris following two northeast-southwest axes: the branch of the Royal canal and a major thoroughfare that bounded the city to the south and bent southeastward upon meeting the river, following its course deep into Mesopotamia. These two arteries created the armature from which the urban grid devolved. It consisted of a checkerboard pattern of hitherto unseen dimensions, with blocks that reckoned a staggering average size of 144.7×72.35 m. This system created a number of additional open squares, which may reflect a distinct local, Mesopotamian imprint in the design of the Seleucid capital. One of these squares (Square B) revealed an extraordinary archive with large caches of seals, figurines, and coins that demonstrate the merging of Mesopotamian and Hellenic aesthetics.⁵⁴ *Bullae* with impressions of Marduk and Dionysus show the remarkable juxtaposition of these traditions as well as the religious syncretism resulting from the fusion of Seleucid colonists of various constituencies.⁵⁵

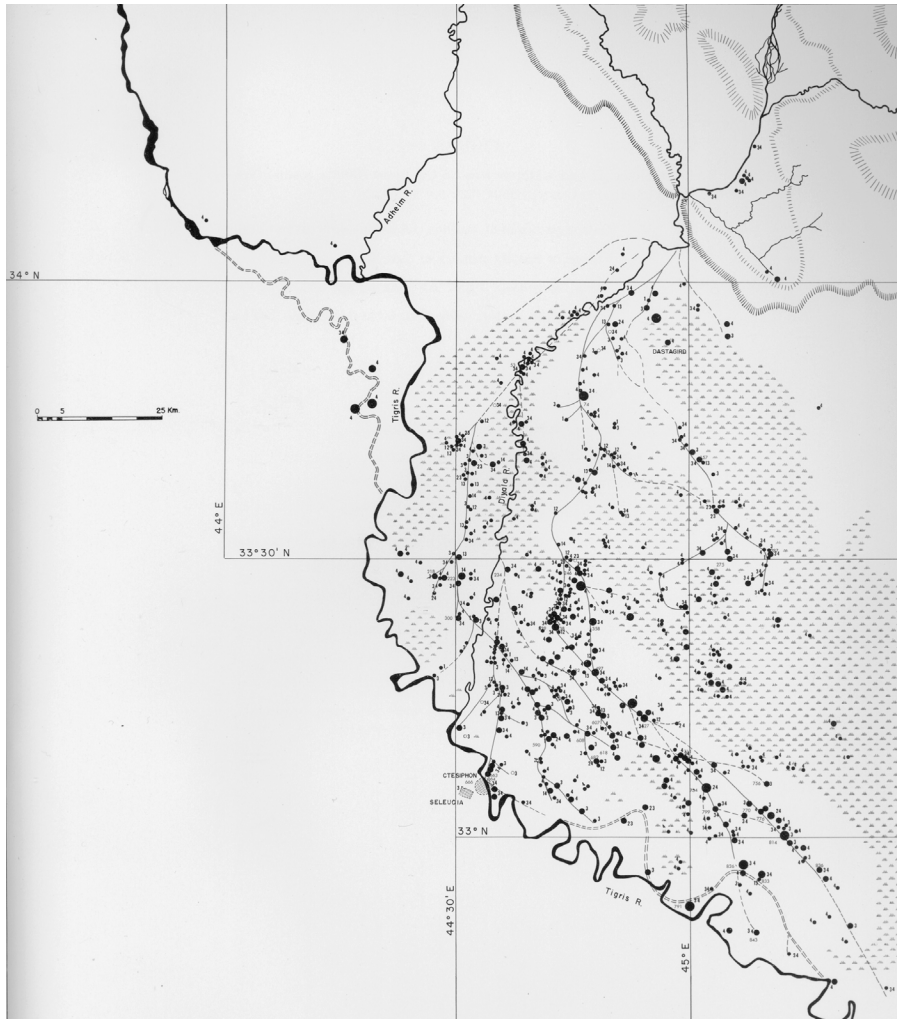
Overall, Seleucia's utilitarian city plan may have anticipated solutions that were used at Antioch. The concentration of tells in the southern half of the city

may have favored the insertion of domestic quarters. The excavations in the so-called South Agora (level IV) have in fact uncovered a distinct pattern of houses of Mesopotamian design that adjusted their setting on the slopes through extensive terracing. By contrast, the development of the northern sector may owe something to the realization of the royal infrastructure.⁵⁶ Here, a northeast-southwest thoroughfare intersected with a large *stoa* on the eastern side of Square B; the latter's north side looked toward the slopes of the Tell and, it seems, may have accommodated a theater of considerable size, equipped with *scenae frons* and various annexes, among which may have been a shrine. It is in this context that we might recognize a "Pergamene" element in the cityscape, which negotiated with heights and realized a cluster of intimately linked central structures: a major artery of traffic, the agora framed on two sides by the *stoa* and the archives, and on its north side by the theater complex.

Antioch's planners may have appropriated similar planning solutions, situating the early administrative and religious foci in prominent position on the slopes of Mt. Silpius. Even the elusive Tetragonos Agora, established by Antiochos Epiphanes and equipped with archives (*grammatophylakion*) similar to those of Seleucia on the Tigris, may have lain in this district.⁵⁷

What stands out is the duality that pervaded the Seleucid operations on the banks of the Tigris. Firmly rooted in the Mesopotamian tradition of building techniques, usage of space, and manipulation of a complicated landscape and yet, sheathed in the visual language of the Greek polis, Seleucia is a powerful example of the synthesis practices by its founders. While a thorough treatment of Seleucia lies beyond the scope of this book, we must focus on the impact that the foundation and growth of Seleucia exerted on its environs; the settlement stimuli that the Seleucid capital spurred in the adjacent northeastern Diyala plains merits close scrutiny. As with Antioch, Seleucia's foundation and development cannot be divorced from its physical situation, and the river's alluvial basin. It is plain that the Tigris riverbed greatly affected the urbanization of the region; archaeological surveys in the adjacent Diyala plains confirm this. Here, in this fertile basin at the junction of the Tigris and the Diyala river, Robert McC. Adams in the 1960s conducted a pioneering survey that illustrated the ebb and flow of ancient settlement and land use in the region for a staggering 6000-year span. Of particular interest to this study are the trends relating to the Seleucid-Parthian period (Figure 2.10), the impact that the foundation of Seleucia had on this landscape, and the vast royal irrigation systems that were implemented.⁵⁸

First, a new urban culture permeated the region in the early Hellenistic era, when a constellation of cities, Seleucia, Ctesiphon and possibly the elusive Athemita and Scaphae (4), small urban centers (5), large towns (24), small towns (50), and villages (116) dotted the region. Altogether, 1507 ha. of new settlement over a sampled region of approximately 8,000 ha., an



2.10. Seleucia on the Tigris and the Diyala Plain in 625 BCE–AD 226

“explosive” new era, as McC. Adams puts it. Although possibly skewed by reconnaissance techniques that used methods and means of the day,⁵⁹ these numbers are nevertheless impressive, and one can hardly escape the evidence for the nucleation of new urban communities and the distribution of small foci. That these were the result of large-scale veteran colonization and movements of communities that plausibly followed on the foundation of the capital city is a suggestive possibility.⁶⁰ What is more, the improvement of ancient routes and arteries of traffic brought connectivity to this system; its backbone, however, was the royal road that linked Seleucia to Bactria and cut through the Diyala plains.

While the textual record is silent about the city planning campaigns that altered the region, the archaeological evidence shows that this heavy

urbanization was no passing moment in its history. Rather, it underpinned further developments in the Sasanian era. McC. Adams aptly commented that the overall peaceful conditions that pervaded the region during the Hellenistic and Parthian periods might have favored the growth of these communities and the stability of their economies. Altogether, it seems that the patterns observed in the Diyala plains, in conjunction with the establishment of the new capital at Seleucia, illustrate what Pierre Bryant called the *production tributaire*,⁶¹ a model that draws heavily on the fourth century BCE *Oikonomia* of unknown authorship. Seleucia was then the fulcrum that hierarchically ordered agglomerations and non-urban communities, from the megalopolis to the less than one hectare farm. Capillary surveying of the territory, rapid military enlistments, and ease of collecting taxes were but some of the benefits. Each village represented a fiscal unit, and in all likelihood was bound by the principle of collective responsibility in paying its dues to the royal administration.⁶² Means and production and governance were in the hands of each rural community; yet the Seleucid king owned the land. The massive canals that diverted the waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates cemented a sense of regimented space, and were the visual reminders of the large administrative structure that oversaw the activities of these communities. As we will see in the next chapters, Seleucid Antioch grew and expanded along comparable lines.

5 TWO TYCHAI, ONE CITY

Seleucia harnessed the idea of a utilitarian urban fabric that balanced the construction of domestic quarters and public buildings while also exploiting to the fullest the benefits of the river and extant arteries of traffic. The ability to sustain the region's food supply remained a fundamental prerequisite of the new urbanization. Were any of these criteria taken into account by the surveyors as they mapped out the space to be taken for the foundation at Antioch? Or, if we assume that Seleucia served as a point of reference, how did the transition from concept to reality come about? Propaganda, logistics, and practical matters intersected at that early stage. As Seleucia on the Tigris replaced Babylon, Antioch was intended to eclipse nearby Antigoneia and its political significance.⁶³ Legend has it that the entire population of Antigoneia, established by Antigonos Monophtalmos in 306 BCE and tallying some 5300 Greek and Macedonian colonists, was forcibly relocated to Antioch after the battle of Ipsos in 301 BCE. The emptying of Antigoneia may have set a precedent in the ways that Hellenistic kingdoms dealt with independent poleis that had to be removed. The destruction and forcible dislocation of Kolophon and Lebedos' populations for the aggrandizement of the new city Arsinoe-Ephesos in 294 BCE by Lysimachus is a poignant example of a practice that was fairly widespread in the Hellenistic period.⁶⁴ Whether this phenomenon

may be considered a form of synoikismos unique to Asia and the Greek East, which led to marrying and altogether eliminating many communities is an interesting possibility. Nevertheless, as with Antigoneia, the two communities of Kolophon and Lebedos didn't fully cease to exist.

It appears, however, that even the stones that had been used for the building of Antigoneia were transferred to the new site, over a distance of forty stades, so Libanius implies.⁶⁵ In reality, there was no shortage of building stone near Antioch's site, as ancient quarries in the Amanus testify, so Libanius' claim must be taken with a grain of salt. Moreover, where Antigoneia was located is the rub. To date no tangible trace of the city has been identified. Diodorus Siculus vaguely contends that the city was "*well situated to watch Babylonia and the upper satrapies, and also lower Syria and the provinces as far as Egypt.*" Dio, by contrast, suggests that it was still inhabited at the time of the first Parthian wars, when the Persians failed to attack Antioch (53 BCE), besieged Antigoneia and failed because of the density of woods.⁶⁶ Now this information implies the survival of the city in some form well into the first century BCE. Also, it suggests a possible location for Antigoneia, perhaps straddling the slopes of the Amanus Mt. Thickly covered by forests of high trees yet equally conducive to settlement, these north to south rolling hills jut out of the Amanus Mt. and form a piedmont district that was suited for occupation. While the AVRPA archaeological survey of the Amuq Valley has identified many ancient sites, some of which are particularly sizable along the Amanus' piedmont (especially in the Bağras and Ceylanlı areas), it was nevertheless unable to identify traces of a city with an alleged perimeter of seventy stades.

Glanville Downey located Antigoneia on a plateau overlooking the Orontes only 8 km northeast of Antioch (Güzelburç) and oriented toward the Amuq Valley's rich farmland.⁶⁷ Similarly, Getzel Cohen's argued that Antigoneia might lie north of Antioch, accepting the distance of forty stades (approximately 7.4 km) and situating the city in the vicinity of the lake.⁶⁸ Be that as it may, it is now apparent that the site of Antigoneia can no longer be identified with the Güzelburç plateau, on account of the absence of archaeological evidence.

While any judgment on Antigoneia's location must necessarily be suspended, it is worthwhile to investigate how the spirit of the "missing city" survived in the construction of Antioch. The appropriation of the Tyche of Antigoneia, the symbol of the divine fortune of the city merits particular attention. John Malalas reports that upon the destruction of the city it was transposed to Antioch and put on display in a *Tetrakionion*, that is a tetrastyle shrine.⁶⁹ Whether the setting up of the Tyche of Antigoneia in Antioch was a mere act of triumph or established a link between the two communities remains to be determined. From the onset, Antioch had her own Tyche: Eutychides, a hitherto unknown protégé of Lysippus realized the Tyche archetype that eventually became Antioch's and shortly after appeared on all



2.11. The AES of Severus Alexander

available ephemera (coins, bullae, statuettes, and the like), copied also by throngs of artists.⁷⁰ It consisted of the seated goddess holding a sheaf of grain and fruits (or a palm branch), wearing a crown representing the city walls; underneath her, a swimming youth personifies the Orontes.⁷¹ This blueprint for the personified city iconography persisted through the Byzantine era and eventually inspired images of the divine fortune of Rome, Constantinople and Alexandria.⁷² As to how the Tyche of Antigoneia and her new, Antiochene doppelganger coexisted in the same locale we can only speculate. Yet, an AES minted under Severus Alexander has the central seated Tyche of Antioch crowned by the emperor, and to her left, is yet another Tyche holding the cornucopia.⁷³ That this iconography alludes to a Tyche and perhaps that of Antigoneia paying its tribute to the Tyche of Antioch is a strong possibility (Figure 2.11).

It would seem that Antioch's built environment was riddled by Tychai, many of which may have departed from the conventional iconography of Eutychemes, as attested by the capital relief from Bourg es-Sleyb. A sanctuary dedicated to the Tyche is reported by the sources to have existed, presumably in the vicinity of the library of Antiochos Philopator.⁷⁴ Yet Malalas reports that Trajan had commissioned the setting up of a bronze Tyche group in the nymphaeum of the theater; in it, the Tyche was represented in the act of receiving a crown from both Seleukos and Antiochos.⁷⁵ But, the alleged presence of an Antigoneia memorial is puzzling. Should that be seen as an act of religious piety, an attempt to appease a goddess after the fact or a stark display of Seleukos' political self-assertion and boasting? What should we make of this ambiguous duality of the Tychai?

By definition, monuments provide a locus for memory where ideals, tensions and complicated events coalesce in historical narratives that may be

recognized to various degrees by a community. Alternatively, as E. Young contends, “they may deliberately reduce the viewers’ comprehension and coarsen the unraveling of events through a patent effort of cooptation, especially when celebrating modest achievements.”⁷⁶ What social effects an Antigoneia memorial was meant to convey in Antioch are difficult to estimate. The sizable contingent of forcibly relocated Antigoneians who populated Antioch from the onset may have experienced this memorial with a mix of malaise and pride. Although of apparently short-lived permanence in Antioch (it was soon removed and sent to Rhosos), at the time of John Malalas in the sixth century the monument still existed in the local collective memory.

New beginnings and old legacies were thus celebrated under the auspices of the Tyche, it seems. But, Seleukos was not slow in proposing a self-conscious visual rhetoric for the new foundation, one which aimed at beautifying the city and had the Tyche of Eutychides as centerpiece of a very ambitious figurative program. A flurry of statues of Athena honoring the Athenians among the founders, monumental heads of horses, horned heads of Seleukos, and fortune-tellers became the markers of the new urban milieu that was to unfold on the slopes of Mt. Silpius and Staurin. In the sixth century CE, a stele with a dedication to Amphion, the omen-giver, located inside the Romanesia Gate still advertised the achievements of Seleukos.⁷⁷ All in all, this rhetoric had a two-fold purpose: first, it was instrumental in creating a series of urban landmarks that informed the routines and daily practices of Antioch’s inhabitants, as they engaged with the city. Second, they articulated the founder’s vision of history. The aesthetic appeal of Seleukos’ labors, prodigies and battles perpetuated the re-enactment of Antioch’s foundation in palpable and direct fashion, and did not interfere with the evolution of the city. Rather, their pious preservation reflected a spirit of commemoration as well as continuity between past and present, while legitimating the claims to capital status.

But, celebrating the city’s foundation through a set of images was not all. For centuries, the Antiochenes preserved these legends and on occasions applied them to the urban décor in ways that fit the aesthetics of the day. The late third century CE Tetracylon of the Elephants, a four-arch passageway that articulated traffic on the Island of the Orontes, exemplified this lamination of past and present by fusing the iconography of the elephant –dear to the Seleucids⁷⁸–with the potent volumes and design of a quintessential third century edifice. Six centuries after the foundation, the ideals and the values intended to bind people together still represented a powerful catalyst for the fostering of a sense of patriotism in Antioch. No surprise then that the emperor Julian deliberately chose this very site to post the *Misopogon* and let it be known that his commitment to make Antioch the most splendid capital was broken forever.⁷⁹

6 ANTIOCH: THE CITY PLAN

In fact, elephants contributed to the physical planning of the city. Pachyderms were used to demarcate benchmarks for the tracing of the urban perimeter and thus facilitate the work of the surveyors, while a trail of flour indicated the length and width of streets and colonnades, an expedient reminiscent of Alexandria's foundation.⁸⁰ With regard to Antioch's city plan, Strabo and Malalas report that between the kingships of Seleukos Nikator and Antiochus Epiphanes, that is a 130-year span of time, at least four major building programs enlarged the original settlement and defined it for the rest of its history.⁸¹ In the successive epochs, from Caesar to Justinian (and even beyond the classical age) the powers that stamped their ambition onto Antioch did so by adding extensions or new developments to the original nucleation. Either executed frenetically, as for example in the epochs of Trajan or Valens, or languishing, as in the post-Severan era, and for most of the third century CE, Antioch's building programs nevertheless attest to the systematic growth of the city. Several baths, basilicae, military and administrative establishments identified the growing institutional role of Antioch following from the days of the Roman annexation of Syria. No emperor shied away from leaving his mark on Antioch and its counterpart Daphne, be it Julius Caesar's Basilica or Trajan's Μέση Πύλη, the monumental arch topped by the group of the she-wolf and twins. Nevertheless, imperial additions hardly impressed Antiochene observers. Interestingly, in his *Chronographia* John Malalas describes all these agents cumulatively as "Basileis," that is kings, be it a Seleucid ruler or a Roman emperor.⁸² In Antioch, a sense of primacy was accorded to the orchestral power of buildings; regardless of their stock, imperial patrons were seen as a continuation of Antioch's old line of monarchs.

Nevertheless, it is likely that the city's first settlement occupied the level, flat space between the Orontes river and the slopes of Mt. Silpius and Mt. Staurin. The planners appeared to have not adequately weighed in the importance of these mountains' most unpredictable stream – the Parmenius. It's difficult to gauge whether the Hellenistic construction of a pair of vaulted channel that conveyed its waters under the Antioch's main street palliated the dangers of flooding in the eastern sectors of the city.⁸³ Furthermore, the detrimental effects of these torrents that also chiseled the morphology of Mt. Silpius have not been adequately brought into focus. Of course the Orontes river also tried the fortunes of Antioch time and again. Its unpredictable regime caused damage that, however, was not tantamount to that of the streams: debris, silting, and substantial deposits of mud had to be reckoned with punctually each rain season. It is worth repeating how works the size of the Iron Gate and the vaulted tunnels that channeled the waters of the Parmenios under the Forum of Valens, as well as a mesh of small aqueducts sought to curb potential devastations by diverting and channeling waters in systematic fashion.

All the same, the concentration of Hellenistic coins and finds recovered particularly in the northern sector of the future Roman city, and thus a sector less prone to the action of runoff, may suggest that Antioch expanded from North to South.⁸⁴ Moreover, the earliest phase of fortifications in polygonal masonry, can be pinpointed exclusively on the slopes of Mt. Staurin.⁸⁵ We shall return to the description of the fortifications; but, whether this early perimeter was designed to protect the original settlement is a cogent possibility.

Thus, the conspicuous bend of the river and the Island may have demarcated the northwesternmost boundary of the city, while also representing a system of defenses similar to that at Seleucia on the Tigris. The settlement, which straddled the swath of land from the so-called Gate of Aleppo (also known as St. Paul's Gate) down to the Daphne Gate, followed an approximately northeastern-southwestern orientation. The plan plausibly comprised the Philonauta Gate (Gate of the Bridge). In keeping with the model of Seleucia on the Tigris, the latter suggests the existence of a riverine port in the vicinity, perhaps supported by a commercial agora.⁸⁶ Although a speculation, the topography makes it plain that this was the most rational milieu where the main thoroughfare, the river, and the highways heading to the Amanus Mt. and North Syria met. The 1937 small excavations conducted at site 21 H (the so-called Bridge Dig, Figure 2.2) don't lend support to this hypothesis;⁸⁷ yet, it proceeded to intersect a stretch of the Justinianic fortification that followed the course of the Orontes and in all likelihood replicated the early Hellenistic fortifications. The limited nature of the sounding was such that it hampered further exploration. Nevertheless, in the excavators' words "there must have been one (gate) at or near this point."⁸⁸

Other revealing evidence comes from the central expanses of the town; current re-examination of the finds from the sectors 16 O and 17 O – originally designed to investigate the Forum of Valens (Figure 2.2) – reveal the substantial presence in the earliest strata of Hellenistic black glaze vessels associated with a building that lay under what appeared to be a *nymphaeum*. The earliest forms of red and brown slipped bowls of the early third century BCE suggest that this area east of the main thoroughfare was fully incorporated in the early foundation, in spite of the alleged presence of a defensive wall running parallel to the north-south axis of traffic.⁸⁹

All the same, in less than a century after its foundation Antioch expanded its original core to the Island and then east, to finally incorporate the rugged slopes of Mt. Silpius and Mt. Staurin. Notably, the well-known *House of the Calendar*, one of the hallmark houses exhibiting the staple scheme of triclinium-portico-nymphaeum and some of Antioch's finest pavements, was excavated in 1935 on the slopes of Mt. Staurin in the trench 15-R (Figure 2.2). Underneath it, so the reports read, Hellenistic masonry and materials were



2.12. Hellenistic fortifications on the Island: stretch of wall recovered in 1935

identified.⁹⁰ While we cannot make much of this general statement, it nonetheless appears clear that arrangements of houses on the slopes were made possible by the rise of terraces. How widespread this pattern was, however, is difficult to determine.

The inclusion of the Island may have occurred under the mandate of Antiochos III the Great (222–187).⁹¹ The plan of the city may have been decidedly enlarged to reach its greater extent. The Island that had hitherto functioned as a defense now became the city's main focus. A new perimeter of walls may have been soon built to strengthen it, as shown by an impressive segment of fortifications that was examined in passing during the 1934 excavations:⁹² it consisted of heavy masonry in *emplecton*, resting on a foundation of rubble and concrete (Figure 2.12). The ceramics and the fragment of a lamp found in

a fill date this wall to 150–100 BCE, thus opening questions about the overall configuration of the Island in the late Hellenistic period.

Altogether, a system of roads, bridges and the inclusion of a palace realized a development that possibly inspired by the Tell Omar configuration at Seleucia on the Tigris, where buildings with royal and administrative prerogatives came to form a discrete district. The layout and appearance of Antiochos' palace cannot be determined, nor is it possible to fix its exact location, because the topography of the Island is not understood. Over time, it became so overlaid with alluvial deposits that it is now fully incorporated in the river's eastern bank. The Orontes moreover has also changed course several times. Today, it skirts the northwest area and no longer circumscribes what until the middle ages had been a "city in the city" that was equipped with five bridges and had its own urban grid, such that by the fourth century CE, after a flurry of building initiatives completed under Diocletian it was typically referred to as the *New City*.⁹³ The textual sources nevertheless inform us about the successive developments of the Seleucid palace, from the realization of a stadium by Q. Marcius Rex in 67 BCE to the grand edifice commissioned by Diocletian.⁹⁴ It is tempting to speculate that, although frequently considered the blueprint of the Tetrarchic palace, the latter may have drawn upon its Seleucid predecessor, in the ways that it took space and organized the surrounding topography in the effort to create a full-fledged royal enclave.⁹⁵

It is regrettable that the Princeton excavations on the Island missed these and other main targets, notably the octagonal church of Constantine. The excavation of quadrant 10 N, in particular (Figure 2.2), brought to light the well-known *Atrium House* with its pavements depicting the Judgment of Paris and the Drinking Contest.⁹⁶ The earlier strata of the complex are dated to the Augustan era, with no apparent traces of previous Hellenistic phases. Nor were the investigations in the vicinity any more fruitful: other than the *Atrium House* they identified in this area five baths spanning the Roman and Late Roman periods, a heavily weathered circus of possibly built under Constantine. At the staggering size of 520 m in length it could accommodate up to 80,000 spectators (Hippodrome A), (Figure 2.13).



2.13. Antioch's hippodrome: remains of piers and stairways, looking North.

They also located the so-called Byzantine stadium (Hippodrome B in the map), an edifice that, during the fifth and sixth centuries may have replaced the old circus, and, lastly, a temple with its unique T-shaped podium, plausibly designed for the imperial cult.⁹⁷ No indication of the palatial complex was found in the vicinity of these amenities, although traces of a propylon were noted southwest of the circus, nor it can be determined how the roads with porticoes mentioned by the sources articulated the interplay among these various features. Furthermore, the location of the great Constantinian basilica, which is traditionally situated on the Island, is still a matter of dispute.⁹⁸ Also known as the *Domus Aurea* or *Octagon*, this cathedral was completed in 341 under Constantius II, and suffered the blows of the AD 526 earthquake. In 537, however, Ephraem restored the complex and its annexes – among which was a Xenon- and commissioned a new roof with the timber of Daphne's cypress trees. By the time of the great earthquakes that shook Antioch in the early sixth century, however, sizable expanses of the Island had been abandoned. These tremors also shook the Hippodrome and silenced its stands; in the aftermath, its *spolia* became instrumental in the construction of Justinian's wall, a curtain that greatly curtailed the perimeter of the fortifications and the civic fabric.⁹⁹

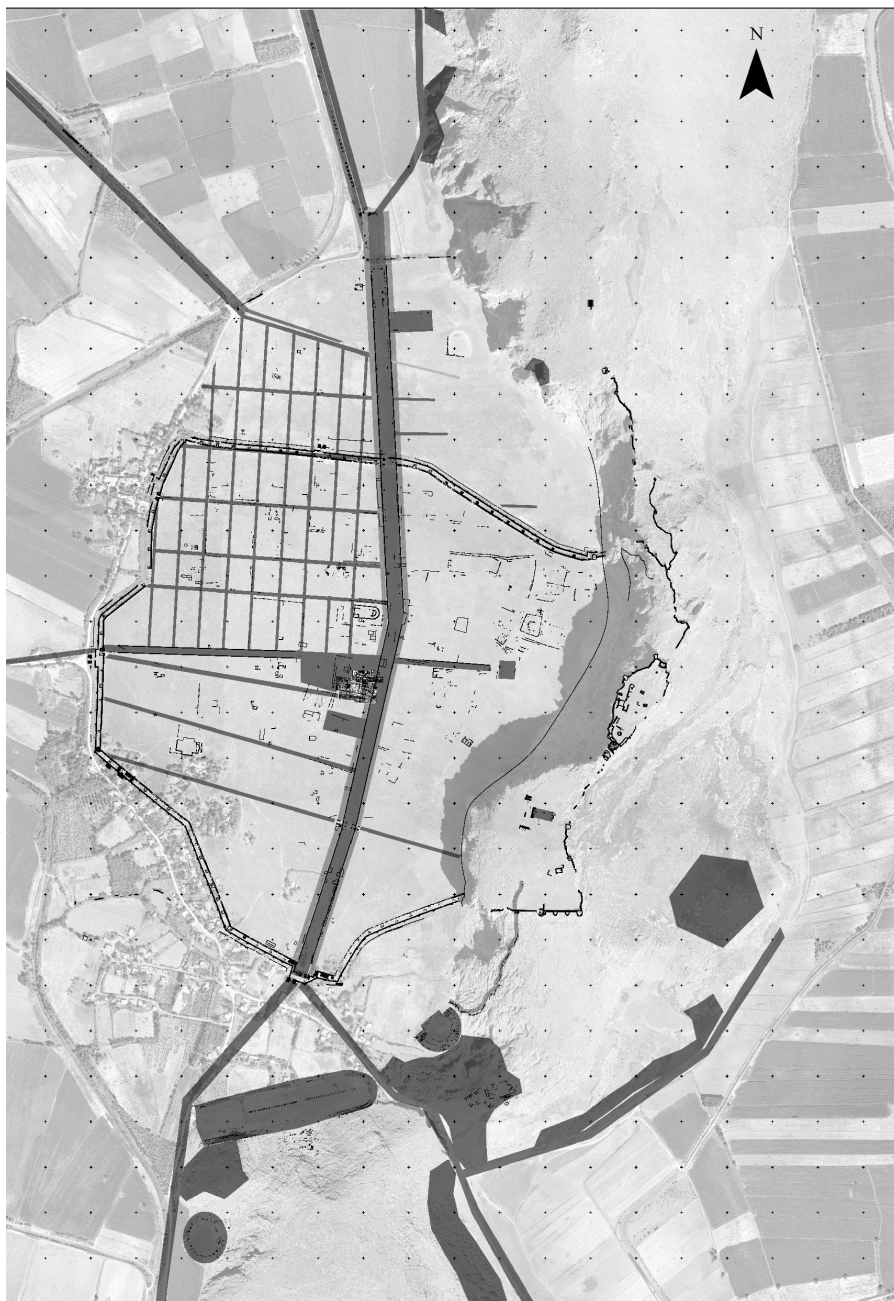
As for the evolution of Antioch's city plan, we should now turn our attention to the quarter of Epiphaneia,¹⁰⁰ which owes its name to Antiochos IV Epiphanes (175–164) and straddled a slope between Mt. Silpios and Mt. Staurin: here the decisive step toward the incorporation of the highlands was taken. Recent ground penetrating radar surveys carried out by Gunnar Brands and his team have revealed the presence of a discrete urban grid with discrete insulae measuring 68 × 34 m. What is more, a limited surface collection went

hand in hand with the geophysical survey. Although the ceramic evidence shows the most typical continuum from the Seleucids to the Islamic eras, it is safe to surmise that no materials seem to pre-date the early second century BCE.¹⁰¹ Now sandwiched between the perimeters of the internal and external walls of the city (Figure 2.15), this district developed along a small system of orthogonal axes, one of which may not have exceeded two hundred meters east/west and possibly a hundred north/south. The Tetragonos Agora and its archives may have been part of this development,¹⁰² thus suggesting a movement of the official buildings away from the Island. How this development was integrated within the greater city can't be understood as yet; it appears though that a dirt road cutting Mt. Staurin northwest/southeast along a deeply incised *wadi* led into the city.¹⁰³

Here in this district we can best appreciate, however, the stunning palimpsest of city defenses strewn between Mt. Silpius and Mt. Staurin. In a conglomeration of disparate architectural plans of various dates, from the Seleucid epoch to the Julio Claudians, from the mandate of Justinian to the days of the Crusaders, the evidence of the earliest defenses can hardly be grasped.¹⁰⁴ Seven different types of building techniques from polygonal masonry to various forms of rubble-work and limestone sheathing are present and pose questions about their makers.¹⁰⁵ The Middle Byzantine fortress on the summit of Mt. Silpius and the imposing fortifications dating to the mandate of Theodosius II are the best known: strong towers and precipitous walls, they define the overall perimeter of a system that embraced the summit of Mt. Silpius and the western bank of the Orontes, with new developments also added to the city's southern sector.¹⁰⁶ Notably, this emphasis on the southern quarters of the city represented an innovation inasmuch as the fulcrum of the city had been previously placed on the Island, northwest of the city. It is also worth noting that a miniature replica of Antioch's perimeter of defenses was designed for the city of Anazarbos in Cilicia, built to enclose the lower city and the highest ground of the adjacent crag with a similar, wide-embracing fortification.¹⁰⁷ The completion of this project in all likelihood occurred under the house of Theodosius, thus in synchrony with the works at Antioch, and presumably replicated a Hellenistic or Roman predecessor. (Figure 2.14) What is more, the Theodosian perimeter at Anazarbos equally re-designed the layout of the city, harnessed the synchronic demolition of numerous pagan sanctuaries, and signaled the involvement of the imperial agency in Cilicia as in Syria.

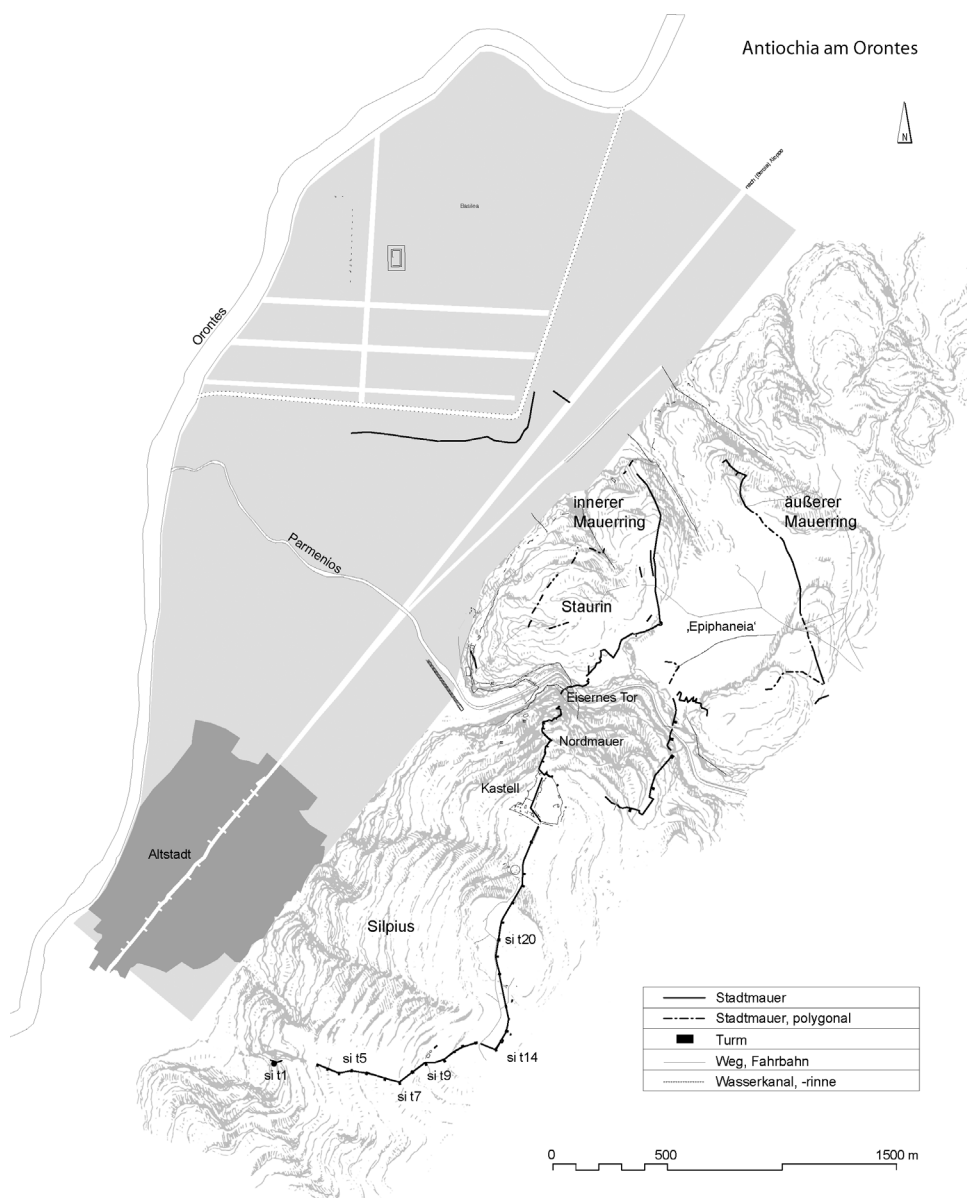
As for Antioch's fortifications, some stretches of polygonal masonry can still be seen near the summit of Mt. Staurin and along its eastern slopes, incorporated in the perimeter of the external Roman defenses allegedly commissioned under the mandate of Tiberius (Figure 2.15).¹⁰⁸

Whether a system of fortifications was completed during the early days of the foundation or under Antiochos IV Epiphanes in an effort to encompass



2.14. Anazarbos: the city-walls and the ground-plan of the city during the Roman, Islamic, and Armenian periods

both the city on the plain and its heights is, as Hoepfner suggests, difficult to determine.¹⁰⁹ The possibility that an early settlement gravitated around the northern sector of the Roman city has already been mentioned, but it should also be noted that a comparable system of quarry-faced and hammer-dressed



2.15. Antioch's defenses and location of Epiphaneia

polygonal limestone masonry is documented in several stretches of the early fortifications of Seleucia Pieria, along the eastern wall and near the so-called Bab el-Mina gate; that they date to the early days of the foundation is a possibility that is worth pursuing.¹¹⁰ But this is not all, for Cyrrhus in the upper Afrin Valley, perhaps an early third century BCE Seleucid foundation, displays a system of polygonal foundations in the fortifications of the citadel, as well as in the north, south and east sectors of the lower city.¹¹¹ Moreover, recent soundings on the acropolis of Cyrrhus show that the width of these

polygonal walls (m. 2.80–2.20) is comparable to the curtains at both Seleucia Pieria and, apparently, Antioch. Whether this construction technique was the signature of Seleucid fortifications in northern Syria is thus a concrete possibility. As noted by Van Berchem,¹¹² the design of these polygonal fortifications may signal the ingenuity of the Seleucid builders, not least in the departure from systems of equidistant towers and linearity that were the norm in Mesopotamia. In seeking to protect the highest grounds possible and the lower terrain altogether, they had to resort to the scheme that shaped city plans at Priene or Heraklea on Latmos, using polygonal masonry.

At Antioch urban foci and the perimeter of fortifications coalesced around the main thoroughfare, also known as the city *cardo*. City blocks known as *πλινθεῖα*¹¹³ probably measured on average 116×58 m, and so were similar to those in Seleukia on the Tigris, and Laodicea where the city blocks measured 105×52 m. At least three different orientations have been suggested in the positioning of city blocks, two of which may hark back to the early days of the foundation.¹¹⁴ Be that as it may, recent salvage excavations for the construction of a hotel in the heart of Antakya are expected to corroborate this information.¹¹⁵

Antioch then grew along the major thoroughfare; it not only connected the various boroughs but also linked the city to the Mediterranean south and central Syria.¹¹⁶ What is more, it connected Antioch's most important public buildings, whether amenities or sanctuaries. Its modern reincarnation, Kurtuluş Caddesi, follows its trajectory and lies above its western porticoes. According to the excavators, natural and man-made catastrophic events account for the nine phases of construction that shaped the artery through history; indeed, the 0.90 cm layer of sediment between the second century and the Justinianic phases noted in the excavation of quadrant 19 M (Figure 2.2) is suggestive of the spoliation and refurbishing that were so typical in Antioch.¹¹⁷

Nevertheless, the actual design of the thoroughfare is still a matter of dispute. While it seems that in its Justinianic phase – the best documented – it may have been some 24 m wide (including sidewalks and porticoes), the size of its predecessor is hard to estimate. Eight soundings performed at various sites along Kurtuluş Caddesi between 1932 and 1937 brought to light segments of the road during the Byzantine and Roman periods; however, reconstructing its evolution from the unpaved Hellenistic axis to its monumental reincarnation has proved an impossible task.¹¹⁸ Similarly, the exact spatial sequence of Antioch's main public buildings lining the avenue cannot be established with any certainty in the archaeological record, in spite of abundant references in textual sources.

Fundamentally, this road allowed movement around the city. It was the locus for various manifestations of popular mobility: riots, acclamations, food distributions, and funeral parades. Here on this pivotal axis Antioch's many

historical layers converge. The grand Seleucid military parades, the mourning of great Germanicus' body, the solemn entrance of St. Symeon's coffin, and the triumphal entrance of Manuel I Komnenos in 1159 are but some events that bring into focus the centrality of this axis. A commingling of emotions, political anxieties and religious tensions unfolded along this boulevard and demarcated some of Antioch's most momentous events. Now human socialization is grounded in the sensory perception of others; Libanius in his oration *Antiochikos* celebrated the architecture and porticoes of the route as conducive to friendship, camaraderie, and the fostering of a sense of belonging and identity. Public performances such as these parades were thus particularly significant precisely because of this fundamental form of social engagement played out so prominently by these quasi-theatrical events framed by two-story *stoai*.

Rich with allusions to the heroic achievements of Seleukos, Antioch's aesthetic environment functioned to join together past and present. Conspicuous examples of the Seleucid past were interwoven in the fabric of the Roman and Late Antique city at the nodal points of its fabric: among these are the Ταυριανὴ Πύλη, the Tauriane Gate, which connected the Island to the rest of the city.¹¹⁹ It was presumably embellished by the sculptural group of Antiochos IV Epiphanes fighting the bull, or an equally horned Seleukos, representations central in the discourse of Seleucid kingship. A Seleucid coin minted in Antioch and bearing the iconography of a charging bull – and on the verso, a winged medusa head – may reproduce the archetype used by the monument of the gate.¹²⁰

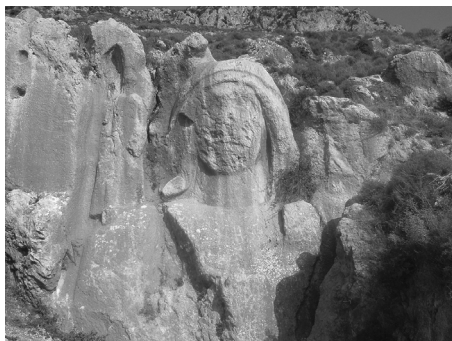
With time, Antioch's thoroughfare modified its function. We should bear in mind that with its definitive monumentalizing under Herod the Great, the built environment of the road and framing porticoes operated as a commercial milieu.¹²¹ Its sequence of shops and commercial activities populated the *stoai* and increased the incessant movement around the city. The design of these porticoes, however, is difficult to determine. Although much bigger in scale at 20.79 m in width, and substantially rebuilt under Trajan, the stunning *cardo* at Apamea might help us to conjure up the long boulevard of Antioch. It may have employed columns at least two meters taller than those at Antioch (8m vs. 6m), but the overall visual effect, thanks to the sequence of porticoes might have been quite similar.¹²²

Thus, multiple foci formed the city's backbone. Building programs of various kinds – albeit intermittently – responded to the here and now and functioned as billboards for political endorsements, modifying the veneer of the city by turns. Put simply, Antioch was apparently no different than hundreds of Graeco-Roman communities that negotiated their urban appearance according to the political currents and whims of their times. The constellation of baths and civic buildings realized under imperial auspices at Antioch

attests to the city's adherence to this tradition: at least eighteen public baths are known to have been built between the first and the sixth century CE, and, buildings changed their functions and layouts constantly as well. For example, in 335 CE the sanctuary of the Muses became the seat of the Count of the East and the emperor Julian converted the Temple of Trajan into a library.¹²³ Makeovers were the city's signature, as Libanius illustrates in a well-known oration written in AD 384 and addressed to the Comes Icarius about the disposal of debris:

*In our cities – your majesty-there is much that produces rubble – the collapse of derelict houses, their demolition by workmen and the laying of foundations for new ones, and the very same thing happens with public buildings too. The rubble from them must be carted outside the walls so that the vacant site can receive some building, private or public.*¹²⁴

These transformations never fundamentally pierced the original Seleucid armature of the city, a foundation that circumscribed the possibilities for reinvention. Even pathways contributed to cementing the relationship between Antiochenes and their surroundings. The well-known, and highly debated itinerary depicted on the Yakto or *Megalopsychia* mosaic found in the vicinity of Daphne in 1933 is an impressive illustration of one such pathway.¹²⁵ The central panel of the pavement hardly needs discussion: its hunting scene adheres to a popular tradition of the fourth and early fifth centuries CE that spread from North Africa throughout the western and eastern provinces.¹²⁶ The organization of elements in the mosaic framework, however, merits further scrutiny. Vignettes of men and women playing games on a table or strolling with children provide an arresting testimony of a day in the life of Antioch. The disconnect between the framework and the central panel aside, various scholars have suggested that the former might really represent the typical journey along Antioch's main thoroughfare from the northern gate all the way to the Daphne suburbs.¹²⁷ What makes this reading problematic is the sequence of buildings illustrated, many of which could not possibly have been situated along the main axis. Rather than an actual itinerary, the mosaic has to be seen as a text through which perceived space comes into existence, where the inhabitants modify and appropriate elements that reflect their uses and routines. Although without apparent spatial logic, this visual itinerary is a telling example of how locals may have viewed their experience of Antioch. The stadium and the *Peripatos* at Daphne, the *Tauriane* gate, the private houses of prominent citizens, and the *Tetrakionion*, where the Seleucid Tyche of Eutychides was still accommodated as late as the sixth century CE, are key loci in the mosaic; all in all, the artist illustrates a city that, during late antiquity, still clung to its Hellenic roots, in spite of the extensive modifications that had transformed its layout and appearance.



2.16. The *Charonion*

In conclusion, Antioch's urban fabric changed considerably over time amid many political, religious, social, and economic upheavals: churches replaced temples and occupied the commercial agoras, imperial palaces became military camps, baths gave way to basilicas, new aqueducts replaced the old ones. Nevertheless, the spirit and materiality of the Seleucid foundation lingered on and shaped the experiences of the residents. The Seleucid agencies had realized a "skeleton" that was to remain virtually unchanged

in the ages to come, when the city in turn served as capital of the Roman Province of Syria, Seat to the count of the East, Islamic hub and Crusader principate. The great projects of urban revamping sponsored by Valens, and Justinian, among others, never altered the fundamental character of Antioch. And even the gods of those early days attended to the continuous transformations of this community. When the city's good fortune fell short, other uncanny forces were summoned. From a cliff of Mt. Silpius the large bust of the *Charonion*, a heavily weathered talisman commissioned by Antiochus IV Epiphanes to ward off the plague that struck the city around 180 BCE continued to affect the superstitions and religious beliefs of local urbanites in the sixth century (Figure 2.16).¹²⁸ Now quietly gazing over the city from the slopes of Mt. Silpius, this monument is the sole survivor of Antioch's Seleucid heyday.

Town and country

Constricted as it was by the perimeter of Seleucid fortifications and armature, the city during the Roman epoch had to come to terms with its growing population. The political prestige of the urban center brought about dense settlement and nucleation in the countryside early in the Principate.¹²⁹ Unlike several other contemporary landscapes that show clear signs of regression and retrenchment at the beginning of the first century CE,¹³⁰ Antioch's *khora* emerged in ways that merit discussion. It needs to be stressed, however, that this trajectory of growth in the countryside was consonant with the urban development that led the city to the status of "glory of the East" at the time of Hadrian, when building programs had apparently reached their peak.¹³¹ The problem of how town and country were able to achieve this prosperity will be addressed in the following chapters, which will elucidate the systems that activated the landscape economically and so construct an interpretative framework for town and country relations in antiquity.

In late antique Antioch, a sense of physical oppression and cramping of urban space was palpable. Evagrius' glimpse of Antioch's swollen crowds that could harbor religious offenders, as well as Libanius' remarks on traffic congestion – for no two carts could ride side by side without blocking traffic – are gripping images of a city that had reached maximum capacity.¹³² People would rally everywhere: disputes, declamations, and even parrots squawking Monophysite litanies created the opportunity for gatherings.¹³³ In response to this state of things, much distress echoed in the words of Theodoret of Cyrrhus, a native of Antioch in the late fourth century CE. His text conveys the disquiet in a city that at this point in history may have surged to some 500,000 inhabitants and witnessed continuous construction of private houses and apartment buildings.¹³⁴ Of course, he had an interest in extolling the bleak yet spiritually rich panoramas that lay over the Syrian hills where hermits lived in rugged asceticism. In a similar vein, confusion and cramping of space resonate in the words of John Chrysostom's homilies.¹³⁵ And again Libanius, so quick to praise the virtues of his native city, decried Antioch's unfortunate setting. Unlike his *Antiochikos*, in successive compositions he lamented the city as a place that had become suddenly “infested by snakes, flies, and locusts.”¹³⁶ Colored by personal or religious agendas, these accounts nonetheless illustrate the inadequacy of its urban space with which the fourth century city – now raised to extraordinary prominence – had to reckon. The one outlet, more than ever before, became the vastness of the Amuq Plain, densely inhabited from the days of the Seleucid foundation. Here, as with Seleucia on the Tigris, Antioch on the Orontes was not slow to develop a system of subsidiary settlements in its territory.

Chapter 3 illustrates the strategies, and environmental challenges that brought about the dissemination of hundreds of communities that had been intimately tied to the city. But, more to the point, it probes the character of a countryside that was administered, partitioned, and experienced in ways that prolonged the durable Seleucid imprint. The symbiotic relationship between Antioch and its territory is thus the main thrust of the next section.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PLAIN OF ANTIOCH AND THE AMUQ VALLEY

This chapter is concerned with the formation and expansion of Antioch's territory in the northern and eastern districts of the Amuq Valley, a landscape that during the course of antiquity represented the city's natural outlet. Here, amid the meanders of the Orontes, the swamps of the Lake of Antioch, and the sweeps of a most fertile plain, a constellation of farm- and village-based communities grew in synchrony with the foundation of the city. In so doing, the Seleucid surveyors replicated the system of extensive land exploitation that sustained the city of Seleucia on the Tigris, integrated as it was by an intricate system of paths, trails and roads. As attested by the rich archaeological record, the dissemination and size of these sites grew with time: by the time of Julian the Apostate, more than six hundred years later, as many as 10,000 *kleroi* (rural settlements) may have punctuated the territory of Antioch.¹ Exaggerated though this figure may be, it nonetheless affirms the stunning territorial expansion of Antioch, captured by a carpet of small sites.

Other than teasing out the distinctive traits of this mesh of nucleations, I am particularly interested to examine how the new settlements coped with a changing ecosystem. Functioning as a spatial theater, the Amuq Valley articulated the movements and the relationships of hundreds of communities. How human occupation in this region reflected significant structural changes in Antiochene society, however, is the main object of inquiry. To counter any false impression of deterministic undertones though, we should keep in mind that the modifications in the physical environment of the Amuq Valley must

be assessed against societal transformations and economic realities induced by the city of Antioch. In his approach to human ecology, Vernon Scarborough contends that any physical environment with its suite of natural forces and phenomena is *necessarily contextualized by culture*.² The aggregate archaeological evidence of the Amuq Valley Regional Survey and previous research in the region thus guide us in exploring the diverse patterns of human occupation in the region along with the strategies adopted by rural communities in the face of environmental downturns and alterations in the socio-political underpinnings of Antioch. One byproduct of this narrative, however, is the stunning increment of Antioch territory, and the making of one of the largest town and country districts of Classical/Late Antiquity.

I A VALLEY

Situated in the northwestern Levant and located within the depression of Kahramanmaraş-Hatay, the Amuq Valley is the northernmost stretch of the fault line that extends from the Rift Valley in East Africa up to the depression of Gor between Jordan and Israel, the Dead Sea Fault Zone. This tectonic configuration, in addition to the converging of two other systems of active faults (northeast-southwest/north-south) that flank the Amuq Valley is of most importance here. In short, it accounts for the region's susceptibility to earthquakes, which historically had serious consequences for the urban center, as well as for life in the region at large.³ Local communities had to cope with this Damocles' sword for millennia; however, not even renaming Antioch *Theoupolis* after yet another quake in AD 528 was of any avail against this most potent conjunction of faults and seismic energy.⁴

Geographically, the Amuq Valley retains a hinge position between the Tigris-Euphrates basins and the Mediterranean, and has played a key role for millennia in being the portal to the East (Figure 3.1).

Its ancient name *Amyke* bears testimony to the legendary events that may have framed the foundation of Antioch in the first decades of the fourth century BCE.⁵ Myth has it that Amyke, daughter of one Salaminos, king of Cyprus, brought with her a contingent of fellow citizens and settled them on Mt. Silpius. When she died, she was buried somewhere in the plain, some 100 stades from the city.⁶ The conflation of myth and history here is formidable; in particular, the involvement of contingents of Greek soldiers and mercenaries upon the founding of Antioch reverberate in



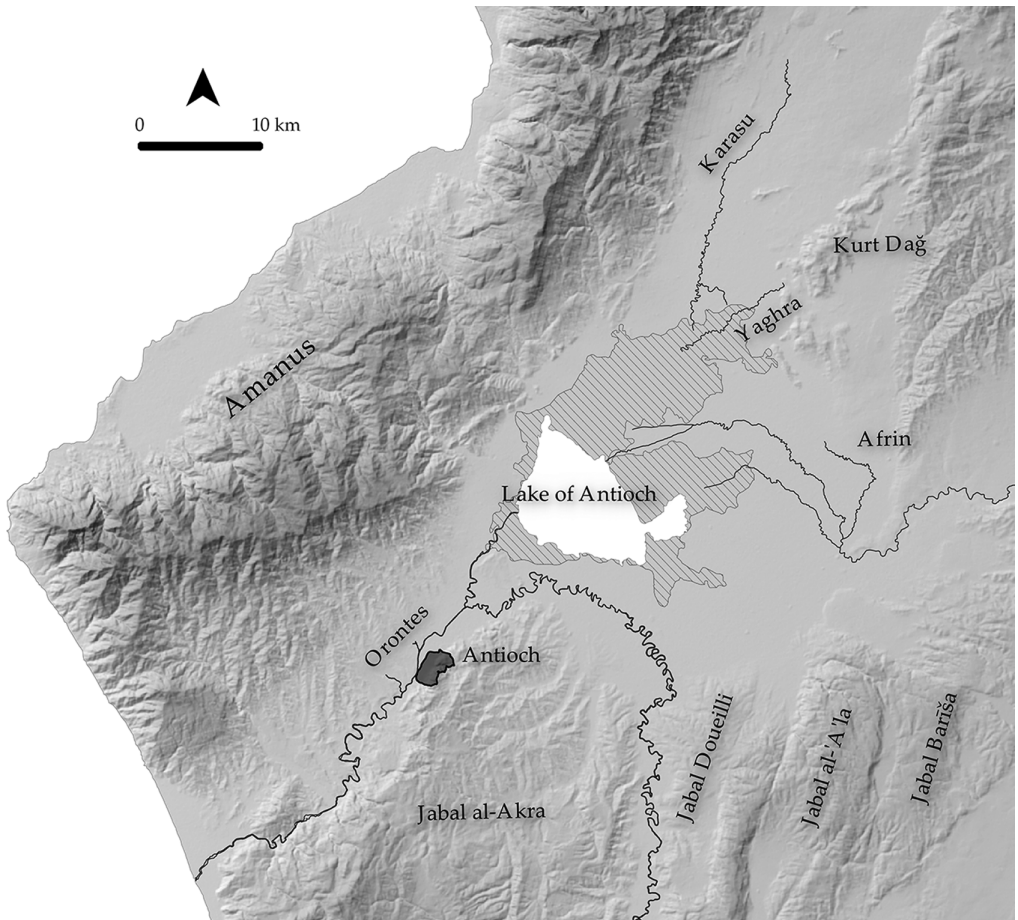
3.1. The Amuq Plain and the Amanus Mt. seen from the buried rampart of the fortified site AS 190

these legends.⁷ Yet, it is also worthwhile to consider the female gendering of this landscape, all the more in a historical context where women had no visibility, were excluded from land rights, and altogether crippled by restrictions on economic options. It may not have been so; lifestyles and experiences of local women may have contributed to the shaping of the topography of this landscape. As we saw in Chapter 2 maidens – whether sacrificed or not – were chosen to incarnate the fortunes of Antigoneia and Antioch. In turn, one remarkable woman became the identifier of valley for the ages to come. To be sure, the memories of those epic events lingered on for ages: the thirteenth-century CE historian Yāqūt al-Hamawīar-Rūmī still referred to the lowlands of the plain of Antioch as Al ‘Amq (deep), while the modern denomination is Amik Ovası.⁸

At this juncture, a look at the physical properties of the region is in order. Topographic diversity is the Amuq Valley’s hallmark.⁹ Its lake and central, dominant plain is framed by the high peaks of the Amanus mountains to the west, the heavily eroded limestone massif of the Jabal al-‘Aqra to the south – stemming from Mount Silpius, on the slopes of which lies Antioch – and finally, a rather more complex system of eroded hills to the northeast, the Kurt Dağ (Map 1).

The most conspicuous feature in the valley, the alluvial plain of Antioch (Amik Ovası) is of Late Holocene formation and consists primarily of humic, highly fertile soils located at an average height of 80–85 meters above sea level. Overall, it measures approximately 35 × 40 sq. km and encompasses some 1,400 sq. km of well-watered land, bordered by the Amanus to the west and the limestone Jibāl to the southeast; it is very flat, boasting a maximum 2% of slope range. (Figure 3.1) Today, vast plantations of maize, wheat, potato, tobacco, beans, sunflower, and cotton populate the plain, representing the district of Hatay’s main economic asset. Yet hundreds of mounds, small and big, still remind the viewer of the cultures that intersected in this region long before the foundation of Antioch on the Orontes.

Framing the plain to the west are the Amanus Mountains (Nur Dağları): a massive, compact conglomeration of ultrabasic and metamorphic rock and limestones that formed in the Precambrian era by means of the movement of the Arabian and Eurasian tectonic plates. Offering excellent timber resources for fuel and construction, the highest peak of the Amanus range reaches 2,260 m. They long served the region’s remarkable cycle of empires from the Assyrians to the Ottomans with their abundant resources, whether for fuel or the building of ships. Furthermore, the presence of significant gold, serpentine, copper ores and mineral resources were fundamental for the development of settlement in this region, as we shall see. Mining resources were not limited to the extraction of minerals; they also extended to the



MAP 1. The Amuq Valley

quarrying of limestone and other soft stone be it for the completion of the building programs that took place in Antioch, or the production of tesserae for the realization of exquisite mosaics.

The Kurt Dağ system to the northeast consists of a pattern of low, highly eroded hills characterized by lack of mineral or other natural resources. The system creates a natural boundary between the Amuq and the plain of Aleppo. To the south of the range are, however, extensive patches of Pliocene and Pleistocene beds rich in basalt, a solid stone ideal for high-quality buildings, for sculpture and for industrial applications.¹⁰

The highlands to the south and the southeast of the plain present a different configuration. The landscape changes abruptly, and the plain makes way for a system of deeply eroded undulating hills covered by maquis and scrub, of thin and stony soils, the so-called *Jibāl*, straddling the modern Turkish-Syrian border. We shall explore these highland districts in Chapter 4.

2 A LAKE, MARSHES, AND THREE RIVERS

Suspended between scientific rigor on the one hand and the contemplation of an irremediably lost past on the other, Jacques Weulersse's study of the Orontes and its catchment remains a trailblazer in the examination of the interface between ancient cultures and their ecosystems. It illustrates the character of the region that greatly depended on the flow of its waters, for good or for ill. Performing rigorous computation of rainfall and catchment analysis, his narrative opens quaint but suggestive vistas:

*The Orontes is not only a river with a lofty name; unlike its glorious peers, the likes of the Cephissus and the Eurotas, it is a river whose waters flow not only into legend; they also flow into reality, spinning norias and water-wheels, watering cities and taking away fevers and desolation.*¹¹

Much has changed from the days of Weulersse, of course. The skeletons of a handful of norias survive in Antakya and in its environs, (Figure 2.4) but forty years of draining the region's lakes and marshes and the consequent implementation of reservoirs, dams, canals, and irrigation devices have substantially altered the topology of the Amuq Plain.

These manipulations of the landscape, however, are by no means restricted to the last century; the use of satellite imagery¹² documents the environmental and fluvial changes that occurred in the valley over the last 4,000 years, and that affected, in particular, the formation of the Lake of Antioch (Figure 3.2).



3.2. The Amuq Valley as appearing in Corona satellite imagery

Dominating the plain for an era that spanned the first millennium BCE and the 1960s, and framed by an ill-defined buffer zone of marshes and pools,¹³ the Amik Gölü, the great Lake of Antioch, was finally drained by the Turkish government as part of a vast reclamation plan in the region. Patches of sand dunes, shelly silts, and sediments of calcareous clays are the only features that survive.

Altogether, early researchers in the valley recognized that the depression had always made it susceptible for the formation of marshes and lakes since the Chalcolithic; more fundamentally though, they agreed upon a “late” date for the formation of the lake, pointing to the aggradation that occurred in the Orontes floodplain, which is the gradual silting of the drainage.¹⁴ Put simply, with the exception of the Karasu and the Afrin, no body of water or subterranean source fed the great lake; rather, aggradation caused the formation of this vast body of shallow waters. Notably, at the time of Robert Braidwood’s fieldwork in the Amuq Valley several mounds had formed islands, thus begging the first questions about the lake’s chronology.¹⁵

There is now consensus that that the area was dry through much of the mid-Holocene, not forming until the early first millennium BCE, as attested by the coring program performed by the AVRPP.¹⁶ By the time of the Seleucid foundation of Antioch, the lake likely covered a rather sizable area, thus impacting settlement, circulation in the valley and the economic life of communities located in its environs, as we shall see. Throughout its history the lake likely remained shallow; some scholars argue, however, that its surface dimensions during the Islamic period may have expanded to 32×11 km while the courses of the Karasu and Afrin were unified.¹⁷ Indeed, it kept on expanding until the twentieth century, albeit in intermittent fashion, finally covering a maximum surface of 350 sq km in the early 1960s.

Importantly, the Lake of Antioch and its wetlands presented ideal conditions for growing crops like rice,¹⁸ and for the thriving of eel and carp, among other species of fish.¹⁹ The early fourth century’s chronicle of the imperial official Theophanes, who traveled from Egypt to Antioch on unknown business, other than providing information on the diet of day, unwittingly accords insights into the lake’s natural abundance.²⁰ It may be surmised that while residing in Antioch the diet of Theophanes and of his brigade consisted in the main of pickled freshwater fish, be it eel or catfish. In the middle ages, pisciculture became presumably even more preponderant, and a thriving export of salted eels is attested in Antioch at the time of the principality.²¹ Centuries later, in 1931 the French lieutenant Jacquot noted that on average 200,000 eels would officially be caught by Antakya fishermen. The Ottoman denomination of *Balıklı Gölü* – the lake rich of fish – couldn’t be more telling.²²

Wetlands surrounded the lake in the north and northeastern sectors of the plain; they steadily grew until the Ottoman period.²³ While staking the



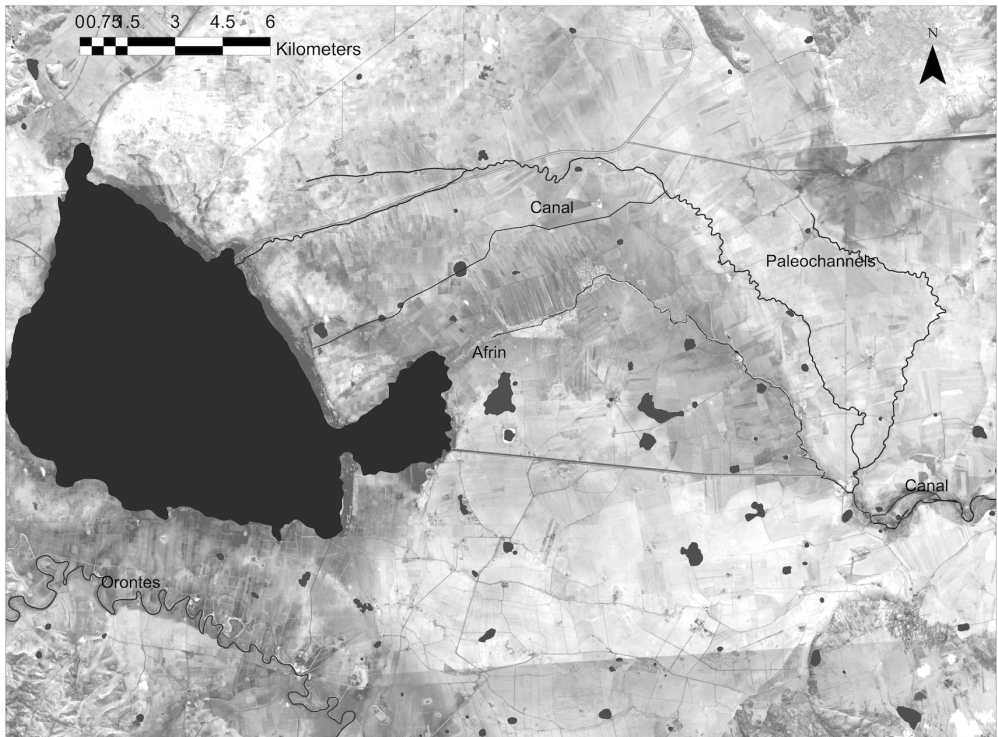
3.3. The river Afrin as it enters the territory of the Republic of Turkey

livelihood of communities, they also demanded intense diking, draining, and excavation of canals, as well as substantial investment of labor throughout the cultural history of the region. Insalubrious though they might have been, to the lake dweller the Amuq swamps were probably held as valuable hunting for wild animals and grazing grounds for water buffaloes.²⁴ To this day, four villages located near the sole remaining patch of wetland in the vicinity of Kırıkhan still live off water buffalo (known as “manda”) both for meat and dairy products.

Lastly, as befitted this environment, palustrine vegetation of hydrophytes like *Nymphaea Alba*, *Arundo Donax* and *Typha Angustifolia* and reeds, which figure prominently in the pavements of Antioch would in all likelihood have created the habitat for the thriving of ungulates, birds, and wild game.²⁵

All in all, the plain’s variable hydrology must also be understood against the background of the rivers that irrigated the plain and rainfall:²⁶ the Orontes inflowing from the south, the Afrin from northeast and the Karasu from the north. The most peculiar aspect that these rivers have in common is the substantial pattern of sedimentation they have caused in the valley through alluvial deposits, which ranges from three to nine meters, as well as the severe aggradation in the valley floor that ultimately led to the lake’s formation and growth.

The Afrin river (Nahr al-Afrin) is the other body of water that played a major role in the settlement narrative of the Amuq Plain (Figure 3.3).



3.4. The river Afrin and its paleo-channels

Referred to as Archeutas by Strabo, it originates in the Kartal Mountains near Gaziantep and gathers most of its waters in Syria, to successively swell in Turkey, to the east of Antioch on the Gaziantep-Urfa platform, where it receives runoff from seasonal streams and torrential waters at large. Its course is also somewhat erratic and, especially upon entering the Amuq Plain, the river follows a sinuous, awkward trajectory to the north instead of in an east-west pattern across the plain. Two additional branches to the north, possibly paleo-channels,²⁷ are a substantial indication of the various directional changes that the riverbed underwent in its history (figure 3.4), and they bear testimony to the intense canalization work that took place in this region, as we shall see next.

Finally, to the north of the lake is the Karasu river, known in antiquity as Arxeuthas, Melas, and Labotas, according to Strabo. Notably, its springs are located in the vicinity of Islahiye (ancient Nicopolis) while extensive Quaternary basalt flows in its vicinity, mostly cascading from the Amanus Mt., thus conveying the dark overtones of the landscape nearby.²⁸ The volume of its waters was rather modest in antiquity as it is today, and is susceptible to seasonal fluctuations, with a bent for abrupt changes and seasonal drought. During the first millennium BCE the river developed into a wetland, thereby creating the Lake Gölbaşı, the development of which was similar, if not synchronic to that of the Lake of Antioch.²⁹

Other than contributing water to the region and the communities settled there, these rivers were the main force behind the substantial sedimentation pattern that occurred on the plain. Of course, this was not uniform in character; the geoarchaeological study of the region has shown that the sedimentation trends that occurred over the last 10,000 years were not evenly distributed.³⁰ In consequence, the levels of accumulation vary significantly, from virtually zero in the south central Afrin fan to 80 cm near the lake. It is needless to reiterate how important it is for archaeologists to have this information when assessing the distribution of ancient sites, especially in the depression areas of the Orontes fan and along the Amanus piedmont, where meters of clay and humic mud bury the archaeological record.³¹ However, the depression areas where most of the sedimentation took place were also likely to be the most flooded in antiquity and thus were not suitable for permanent settlement. If these specific areas accommodated settlement in antiquity, it was sporadic and intermittent. By the same token, in the vicinity of Tell Atchana, seat of the kingdom of Alalakh, particularly prominent during the Early Bronze Age II, where sedimentation buried the lower city under a thick deposit of silt, traces of Roman settlement indicate that perhaps fluctuations in the river bed in antiquity were not as substantial as one might think. Most of the aggradation in this sector of the Amuq actually seems to have taken place in relatively recent times. From this picture it can be inferred that the Amuq Valley's patterns of sedimentation can hardly be reduced to a single formula, and each sector of this complex landscape has to be thoroughly investigated.³² Nor is fertility evenly distributed throughout the plain; soil drainage characteristics, slope, and vegetation are elements that in combination contribute to the fertility of the region and by extension settlement strategies

In short, rivers, lakes, and their respective basins played a fundamental role in shaping the biotic environment that framed the nucleation and the growth of Antioch's town and country. It is tempting to make inferences on the configuration of these ancient ecosystems on the basis of its modern character; yet the dangers of proposing continuities in vegetation patterns between then and now are well known.³³ Also, we should be wary of facile reconstructions of paleoenvironments when the historical sources are limited and so is the availability of solid pollen data for paleographic data, possibly the most reliable proxy indicator of past vegetation cycles. As a whole, the Amuq Valley is an artifact in its own right; the landscape in the valley today is by no means reminiscent of the territory where successive empires and kingdoms exploited its wealth for millennia.³⁴ Nonetheless, how the systematic exploitation of this natural arena began in the Seleucid area, and led to one of the greatest city-systems of antiquity is the question at stake. More to the point, how did a built landscape such as that of the Amuq Valley articulate the actions and lives of diverse communities? And how did those

communities reengineer the landscape to better suit their needs? These are the questions we will now address.

3 FROM KLEROI TO VILLAGES: THE PLAIN OF ANTIOCH

En route from Harim, Syria, across the eastern rolling hills of the Amuq Valley, we encounter the remarkable Getrude Bell, traveler and raconteur. Her characterization of the plain of Antioch couldn't be more poignant:

The rising ground which we had left, now rose into rocky ridges and peaks, the broad valley on our right hand, full of flood water, and beyond it stood a splendid range of mountains. It was not long before we caught sight of the Byzantine towers and walls crowning the ridges to the left, and between hedges of flowering bay we stumbled along the broken pavement of the Roman road that led to Antioch. The road was further occupied by a tributary of the Orontes, which flowed merrily over the pavement.³⁵

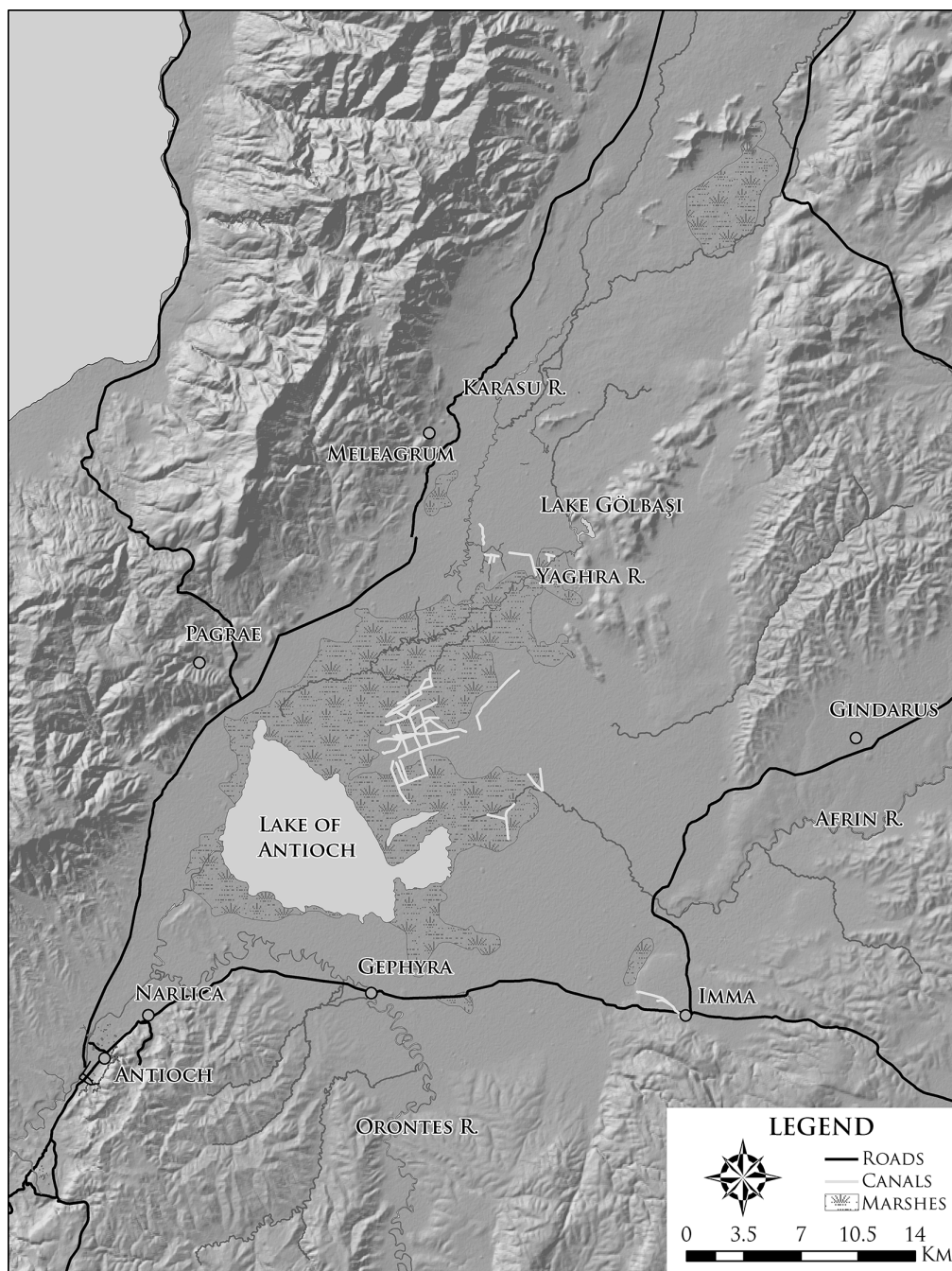
The ascent of the Jabal al A'la, the Amuq Plain, the Lake, and Mt. Silpius in the distance coalesce in one stunning vista. We can almost follow her as she chanced upon the last stretch of the Antioch-Aleppo-Chalcis highway. Few stretches of this road survive; in the 1930s, Braidwood recorded that a portion of the route extended through the vicinity of Tell Keles (AS 124) in the eastern sector of the Amuq Plain,³⁶ while the AVRPP could only trace a few surviving meters in the vicinity of Imma, near the Syrian border (Figure 3.5).

The long-distance movement of troops and goods, in addition to the massive inflow of peasants into and out of Antioch for ecumenical services were the main functions served by this and other major roads that radiated from the city (Map 2). Yet, a less visible network of trails and paths had long shaped the region, informing its topographical constraints, land-tenure practices, and daily routines. Paths that connected communities and fields to their necropoleis articulated movement within this landscape; people trod along these routes for miles, or trundled on ox-carts to haul their goods to Antioch's markets, as in the vignettes that animate Libanius' *Antiochikos*. Ultimately though, this web of minor routes was essential in sustaining the economy of the city and in imposing mental and physical structures on a vast landscape. The path Gertrude Bell had followed from Harim to reach Antioch was indeed one such feature.

Altogether, this mesh of axes of communication created the armature for a dense network of sites, with a concentration in the

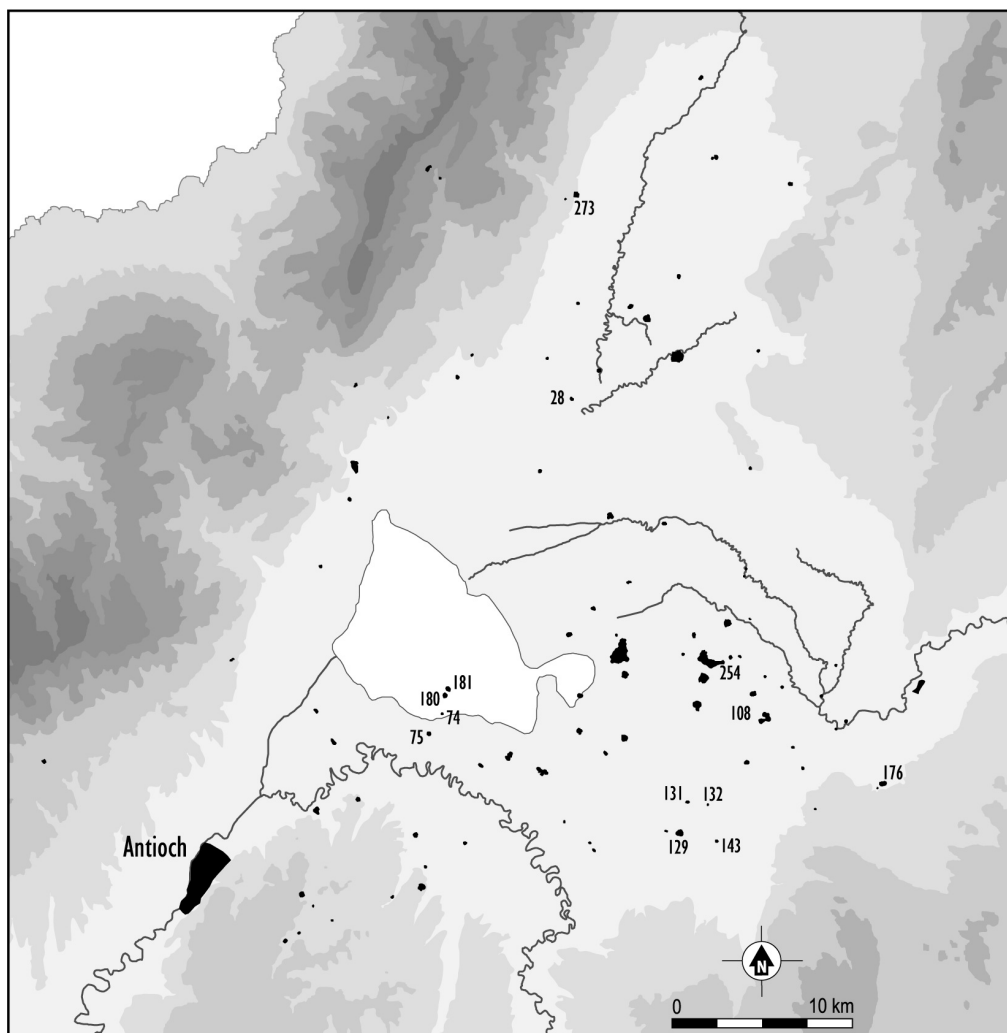


3.5. Traces of the Antioch-Boeroea Roman road near the ancient town of Imma



MAP 2. Antioch and its system of lesser towns, roads, and canals

central Amuq Plain starting in the early third century BCE and peaking in number during the second century BCE, a phenomenon that parallels the growth of Antioch under Antiochos III, under whose rule numerous urban developments were brought to completion.³⁷ Dispersed settlement pattern,



3.6. The Hellenistic settlements and the inundated sites

the emergence of a web of small urban foci (Gephyra, Pagrae, Meleagrum, and Gindarus, all exceeding 100 m in diameter), and settlement hierarchy are the most tangible trends appearing in the archaeological record of this period. More fundamentally, though, the Hellenistic period demarcated the watershed in the settlement history of the Amuq Plain: a brand new pattern of settlement not seen before in the region that occupied low, flat open sites and avoided the ancient mounds, at that point reduced as a stage for human activities.

The Seleucid loss of Asia Minor in the aftermath of the battle of Magnesia (190 BCE) and that of Mesopotamia shortly thereafter may be regarded as the prime factors for Antioch's town and country growth in the second century BCE.³⁸ Now dominating a kingdom that was centered in northern Syria, the city drew settlers relocating from the lost Seleucid districts and from the

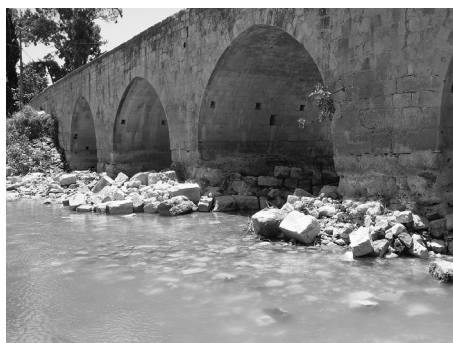
general reconfiguration that the peace treaty enforced. The Seleucid policies of colonization are well known,³⁹ and very likely also contributed to the appearance of dense settlement in the central Amuq Plain.

The rise of a constellation of small towns (Gephyra, Pagrae, Gindarus, and Meleagrum,⁴⁰) in the territory of Antioch since the early days of the foundation, in particular, merits attention, and once again invites a parallel with Seleucia on the Tigris, equally equipped with a cluster of lesser towns, among which were Artemita, Ctesiphon, and four other mounded settlements.

Although poorly documented in the archaeological record, these small towns can be safely situated in the territory of Antioch, and may have functioned as bulwarks, thus conforming to a pattern well attested in Asia Minor.⁴¹

Boasting a Greek name rich with Macedonian allusions, Gephyra (“the bridge”) corresponds today to Demirköprü (former Jisr Hadid), and indeed a worn Roman/Ottoman bridge spanning the Orontes is the town’s only ancient memento (Figure 3.7).

As the Peutinger Table shows, the town served for centuries as a nodal point along the Antioch–Aleppo highway for it joined the latter with the Orontes



3.7. Gephyra, modern Demirköprü: the ancient bridge that spans the Orontes



3.8. Pagrae (modern Bağras) and the Medieval castle overlooking the Amanus Mt. passes

highway that came from Apamea.⁴² With regards to Pagrae, the ancient site mentioned by Strabo lies in all likelihood under the imposing volumes of the castle of Bağras (Figure 3.8). Built under the Crusader Principality of Antioch during the last decades of the twelfth century, it was later taken by Leo II, the Armenian King of Cilicia in the early thirteenth century. Just like in its early Seleucid days, the town commanded the routes across the Amanus Mt. in the vicinity of the Beylan Pass.⁴³

Less known is the Hellenistic facet at Gindarus. Seizing a mound on the upper Afrin Valley this community in all likelihood served as a stronghold along the river. Recent excavations, however, have brought to light ceramics and terracotta figurines that attest without a doubt to settlement during the Early Hellenistic period, as well as to the imprint of Antioch’s material culture.⁴⁴

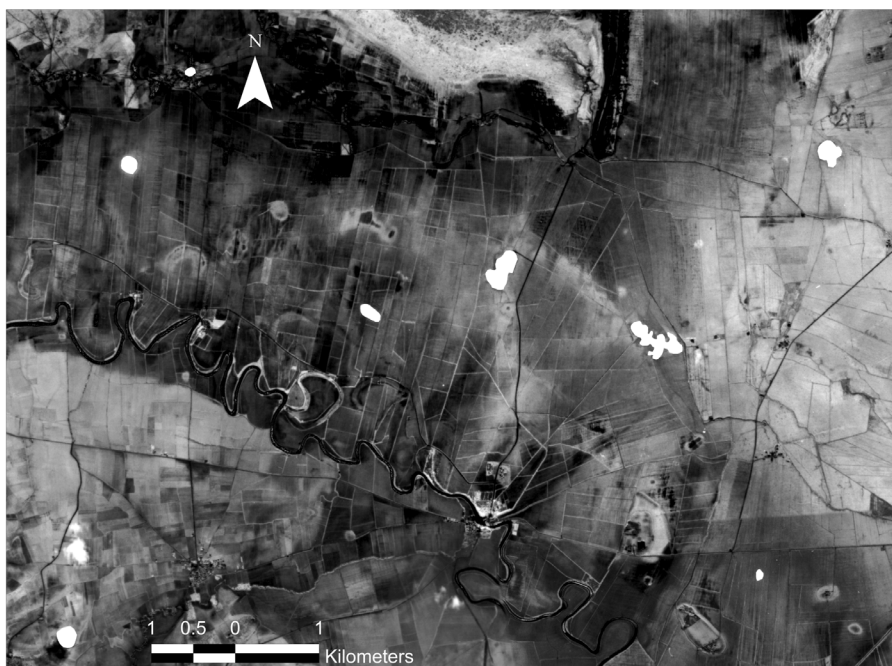
Taken together, the appearance of small towns is but one facet of the transformations that occurred in the central Amuq Plain as early as the beginning of the third century

BCE. A sizable number of communities, most likely colonies promoted by the central government, seized the most profitable and easily exploited regions according to a scheme that emphasized the quality of the soil rather than vicinity to the city. Rather non-descript, small in size (under one hectare), and oriented toward the three river basins, most sites can be safely interpreted as small farmsteads; wheat, barley, and fruits were their main crops.

By and large, these sites were settled in the vicinity of the ancient mounds, if not avoiding them altogether. The exceptions are, however, settlements at Tell el-Judeidah (AS 176) and Üç Tepe (AS 108) in the eastern sector of the plain, each measuring approximately two hectares in size, and located on top of two of the most conspicuous mounds in the plain. The 1930s excavations at Tell el-Judeidah yielded traces of a fifth century monastery that consisted of a small church, residential building with mosaic floor, and tombs, encircled by a wall with a cistern beyond the walls.⁴⁵ Equipped with a rectangular nave paved with red brick and a small square sanctuary at its east end, the ground-plan of the church is reminiscent of the churches that dotted the Syrian Jibāl, a region that will be treated in Chapter 4. All the same, this phase obscures the Hellenistic settlement; only do late fourth century BCE *kantharoi* and slipped bowls hint to the existence of the Seleucid settlement.

All in all, these Hellenistic nucleations are widely distributed across the central plain, and most of them are within reach of arable land; their spacing, however, may have depended on the quality of the soil and the proximity to rivers. By this rationale, the average 3–4 km distance between sites in the vicinity of Antioch decreases to 2 km in the eastern sector of the plain along the Afrin Basin and along the Karasu river to the north. Furthermore, hierarchy of settlement ordered many a village in the ways that communities would control the land; a prime example of this can be seen at AS 254 (Uluca Tarlası), an unknown, large, low-profile site on the broad, central silt plain of the Afrin. It was densely inhabited from the third century BCE, and was surrounded by a system of four very small farms, all measuring less than one hectare. Other sites, however, present a more dispersed pattern of occupation. Elusive in character, they were plausibly the result of the seizing of more marginal and less productive pockets of land.

At this time, in particular, the expansion of the Lake of Antioch and its halo of marshes played an important role in determining niches of settlement seized by these communities. But, it should be noted that a cluster of small farms of the late third century BCE were submerged by the waters of the lake within a few generations after their foundation (Figure 3.6). How this pattern of ecological unbalance was to gradually alter the characteristics of human occupation in the central plain will be brought into sharper focus in successive pages. For now, suffice it to say, floods did not curb the enlargement of local communities during this



3.9. Traces of trails and causeways connecting sites in the central Amuq Plain

period. Causeways, canals, and trails, afforded these groups the possibility to maintain social relations and to enable the circulation of goods, people and ideas. Satellite imagery brings this patterned landscape to the fore and shows how trails among small farms guided movement and enabled the continuity of life (Figure 3.9).

Thus, it is apparent that riverine floods and encroaching marshlands weren't a deterrent to settlement in the central plain. Rather, 91% of the Hellenistic settlement continued in the successive, Roman phase, when Antioch's status was raised to provincial dignity. In all likelihood, the same imprint and social configuration of these communities continued unaltered, as attested by the repertoire of official names and the places they represented.

4 THE ROMAN EPOCH

For the Roman Period the aggregate evidence shows an extraordinary density of rural settlement that took place between Antioch's Late Hellenistic phase and the first century CE. Continuity of settlement between the Late Hellenistic and the Early Roman phases and the establishment of new settlements both on lowlands and highlands are the dominant patterns. Of a total of 287 sites that are reported, 205 were inhabited in the Early Roman period; 35 % of these have Hellenistic foundations.⁴⁶ It can be inferred that the superimposition of

Roman order on this landscape and the increasing intensification of agriculture didn't alter the pre-existing royal land systems, thus leaving intact the administrative configuration of this region. The independent villages and communities that had hitherto exploited this landscape seemingly experienced changes only at a purely fiscal level, with the introduction of the census and thus of a more systematic taxation system.⁴⁷ The presence of a *Κώμη Θρακῶν* on the plain as reported by Stephanus of Byzantium in the sixth century CE, may attest to the conservative character of tenancy schemes in this landscape and altogether the enduring survival of Seleucid nomenclature, resonating as it were with the events that framed Antioch's foundation.⁴⁸

What changed during the Roman era, however, was the city's preeminence, which led to important political and physical changes as early as the time of Julius Caesar, when Antioch was granted *libertas* and a series of ambitious building programs was begun: ultimately, the so-called walls of Tiberius, significantly enlarging the previous Seleucid perimeter, offer testimony to a much enlarged civic community.⁴⁹ In addition, baths and amenities built under Caesar and Agrippa contributed to elevating Antioch to the status of the great cities of the Greek East. Also apparent is the simultaneous emergence of new settlement in Antioch's rural districts at that time,⁵⁰ proving that the growth of the city went hand in hand with the region.

The negotiation between human agencies and the surrounding ecosystem remained the hallmark of the region; fluctuations in the level of the central lake, along with the river floods of the Orontes, Afrin and Karasu, shaped the responses of human agencies in the plain during antiquity. Geoarchaeological studies, however, have showed that the heavy dissemination of sites in the Early Roman period both on the plain and in the highlands may have severely tested the resilience of Antioch's plain ecosystem. Intensive land-use and stress on the vegetation may have led to a pattern of widespread degradation, and by extension, to substantial floods and runoffs on vast portions of the plain. This aspect is of critical importance; as perceived by Tony Wilkinson, "the population expansion that occurred could have sown the seeds of its own decline by encouraging increased landscape degradation and runoff, which in turn resulted in increased flooding, especially by the Orontes, and ultimately causing the development of the Lake of Antioch."⁵¹ The pressure exerted by the lake and its wetlands led to new settlement of the hitherto unexploited limestone plateaus, thus creating the foundation for the decisive expansion of Antioch's landscape onto surrounding highlands, which peaked between the fourth and sixth centuries CE, a phenomenon that I shall return to in the next section.

Overall, settlement in the plain of Antioch during the Early Roman period yielded a constellation of sites that sought to exploit the fertility of the land and access to the main arteries of traffic. Thus, new sites, essentially farms and small

villages, began to occupy previously unexploited parcels of land, although this did not lead to the alteration of the pre-Roman configuration of areas like that of the central Amuq Plain, the most fertile and the most densely occupied area of the district, consisting of the Orontes alluvial fan. Here, systems of villages and farms established by Seleucid law were left untouched by the Roman administration; rather, they provided the grid in which new foci were inserted during the Roman era.⁵² The newly established Roman sites were typically flat and their centers were relatively small, on average 50 m in diameter, as made manifest by the recent AVRPP survey. Each site adapted to the ecological conditions offered by the surroundings. Whether through the harnessing of wetlands or irrigated fields, these communities realized durable settlements while also leaving their imprint on this landscape. The example of Libanius' Jewish tenants boasting four generations of farm-work at the same site attests to a typical module of land usage and tradition that occurred in the plain.⁵³ Some of these ventures, however, appear to have been aborted within a few generations; Corona imagery and archaeological survey have revealed the presence of a sinuous channel, reflecting one of the many fluctuations of the Orontes riverbed, which ultimately led to the burial of sites. The constant and laborious upkeep of canals was key to the sustainability of these settlements and their agricultural practices; in a landscape like that of the Amuq Valley, the minimal ecological downturn, or the simple accumulation of sediment could cripple entire communities.

Of course, the farmers in the Afrin district were aware of the frailty of their ecosystem and the limits of dry-farming; in that vein, they sought to exert control over the river's seasonal swelling by diverting a branch of the river through a canal, thus harnessing to the fullest the river's unanticipated floods, and responding to the immediate needs of various communities. Measuring 2.5 km of length, the Afrin canal served a constellation of villages and farms that were situated further to the north, aligned as they were with the canal, yet with higher concentrations near its head. Today, a sizable portion of this

feature can still be seen on the ground (Figure 3.4, far right, and Figure 3.10).

It is tempting to infer that these same communities were the agencies that commissioned and undertook the excavation of this canal in the Early Roman period. Waterworks of this nature, however, had obvious implications for water-allocation resources and ultimately, in forging a sense of organization among the communities involved. These clusters of villages had to innovate and develop upon their communication and management infrastructures in



3.10. Canal that diverted the waters of the Afrin river

order to better manage water resources, their applications, and thereby develop this micro-region for market production. But that is not all.

On the eastern fringe of the plain, as the Syrian Jibāl gently downgrade into the expanses of the Amuq Plain, other water infrastructures served to connect communities and ease their labor. Khirbet al-Tahoun (AS 202) 3.4 km west of ancient Imma (modern Yenişehir, AS 345) is a good case in point. Imma figures prominent on the Peutinger Table, where it appears on the route to Aleppo and Chalcis. Founded presumably in the Roman period, and later host to a thriving monastic community,⁵⁴ the town witnessed the final battle between Aurelian and Zenobia in 274 CE⁵⁵ a time when the town was also embellished by large scale public buildings, at least judging by the size and quality of *spolia* that are embedded in a fortification that may date to the Crusader period (Figure 3.11).⁵⁶ Theodore of Cyrrhus calls Imma *κώμη μεγίστη καὶ πολυανθρώπος*, a lofty, rhetorical title that he accorded also to cities the size of Edessa.⁵⁷



3.11. Yenişehir, Turkey. The ruins and *spolia* of a fortification of the crusader period

All the same, a natural reservoir in nearby Imma fed a canal that ran across the plateau, skirted a 150 × 150 m village of the Roman/Late Roman periods (AS 347), fetched water to a cistern and from there it continued to propel the watermills located on the slope of the plateau itself at Khirbet al-Tahoun, possibly ancient Paratomos.⁵⁸ The pattern of water precipitation is similar to that at other Roman watermills, like for instance those at Barbegal in southern France, albeit on a much smaller scale (Figure 3.12).⁵⁹

Modern development in the Yenişehir-Reyhanlı corridor and the presence of the Turkish-Syrian border hampers further investigation. What is apparent though, is that these hydraulic features not only demanded steady maintenance, but rapid implementation, in an effort to cope effectively with the flow of waters and avoid undesirable inundations.⁶⁰ This component of management, and not least the rapid execution, enables us to re-populate an almost abstract landscape, and conjure up the actors as well as the aspirations that were behind the decision-making. It is tempting to speculate that the magistrates or representatives of these *κῶμαι* (villages) as stakeholders of these projects⁶¹ in ways that are reminiscent of Antioch's excavation of a canal for fullers in AD 74. Entirely paid for by each borough of Antioch, the latter project entailed the massive excavation of a canal that diverted a branch of the Orontes near the Island in the direction of the Amanus.⁶² As the celebratory inscription boasts, this was a project designed, funded, and completed by Antiochenes to support their local textile industry. In all likelihood, Imma and villages in the environs



3.12. The watermills at Khirbet al-Tahoun and drawing courtesy of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago

realized this water infrastructure independently, investing greatly both in terms of monetary outlay and labor. The outcomes of the project – other than its apparent long term usage – we are not in position to evaluate. Yet, this sharing of the financial responsibility, upkeep, and dividends heightened the cooperation among these communities, and tie them fundamentally to this bare landscape between the Jibāl and the plain.

Thus, whether mechanical or by the hands of man, these hydraulic features had the dual effect of seeking not only to enhance agricultural productivity but also to integrate farmland and village. It can be inferred that by bringing together several communities, the management of water resources contributed to integrating these units in the economic basin of Antioch, while also cementing a sense of belonging. Of course, water allocation patterns may also have generated controversies, and ultimately intra-group conflict; as Libanius reports later in the late fourth century, *komai* patronized by the military would on occasion “steal” water from the river.⁶³ It appears that communities located upstream on canals or bodies of water could negatively impact and deliberately curtail the flow of water to those downstream. Because of its configuration, the Afrin canal discussed earlier could have easily suffered from a scenario like this. Events of this sort apparently escalated during the days of the rhetorician, but it is quite likely that these infringements would have heightened tensions whenever water resources were at a premium.

Aside from negative feedbacks, canals and their causeways had in addition the purpose of sanctioning the boundaries of parcels of land from appropriation and conflicts, and also of tracing routes on the ground, thereby integrating small, nondescript settlements in the mesh of the Antiochene territory. Paşa Höyük (AS 91) is a prominent, mounded site in the Afrin Valley that exhibits the same occupational patterns as the previous examples; its southernmost boundary, however, is marked by a canal, as shown by Corona imagery, and indeed several other foci conform to this same configuration. This site is an example of how a canal was apparently transformed into a route, channeling as it were the routines, movements, and decision-making of these actors. It is quite likely that these conditions lingered on for centuries.

In 1835, while traversing the northern district of the Amuq Valley on a fifteenth century causeway he believed had been built at the time of the Mamluk sultan Qā'itbāy,⁶⁴ William Francis Ainsworth noted:

*We continued up the 'Blackwater' (the Karasu river) to where it was joined by another stream from the north-east called the Egri or 'crooked,' (the Yaghra river) and we turned up this latter stream till we came to the mound or tell of Gul Bashi (Gölbaşı), or 'the head of the lake,' a little beyond which was a bridge and causeway putting a stop to further navigation. This causeway constitutes part of the highway from Aleppo to Alexandretta, is some three miles in length, and is carried through marsh and inundation.*⁶⁵

During the last days of the Ottoman empire canals and raised earthen causeways still demarcated this landscape offering a vivid glimpse of what it may have looked like in antiquity. As it stands, Ainsworth's snapshot of the submerged eastern Amuq Plain is yet another arresting evidence of the earthworks and labor that were the signature of this landscape for millennia, while also informing a sense of movement and human mobility.

But one cannot emphasize enough the role of roads that radiated from Antioch and traversed its territory; besides connecting Antioch to Syria and the Mediterranean, they provided a backbone to the landscape of the Amuq Valley. Much paving and monumentalizing occurred in the early empire; the setting up of an Augustan arch spanning the highway that crossed the Amanus to reach Alexandria ad Issus, the axis known in antiquity as the "Syrian Gates," (modern Beylan pass) is suggestive of the attention that the Roman administration applied to mobility.⁶⁶ The economic development of the region, however, was not the impetus behind the implementation of this system of paved roads. Rather, the swift deployment of troops to southern Syria and the Euphrates stimulated the enhancement of a road-system that harked back to the days of the Seleucids.

In particular, the aforementioned Antioch-Aleppo-Chalcis road was the key-route across northern Syria; it was essential, however, in directing

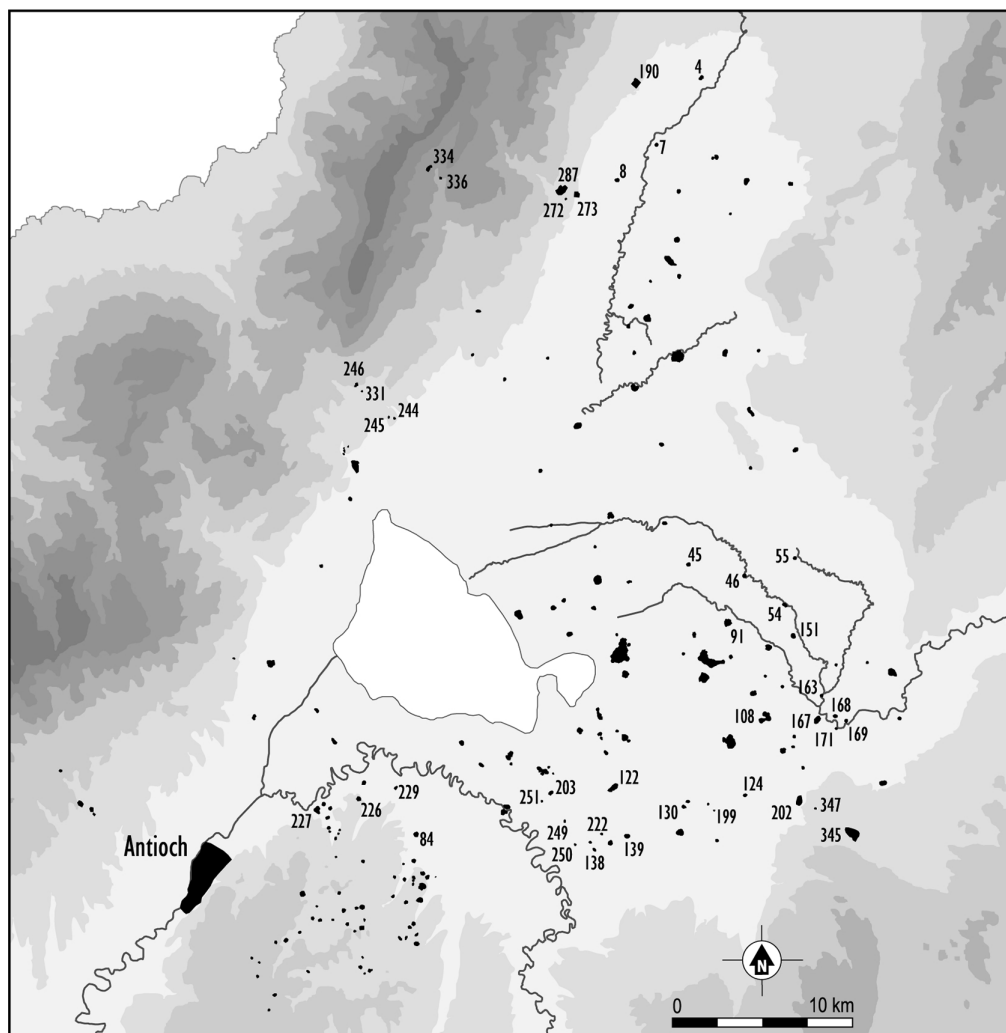
settlement both in the Amuq Valley and in the province at large. Through its many manifestations, it continued all the way to the Euphrates frontier after reaching a junction at the town of Gephyra. The road connected a series of nodal points and military bases across the Roman province, becoming essential with the escalation of political tensions and hostilities between Rome and Persia. Although presumably paved during the Early Roman empire when large contingents of troops were rapidly deployed from Antioch to various locations in southern Syria to withstand the continuous strife of the second half of the first century BCE, this route replicated its Seleucid predecessor, and, as we saw in the previous chapter, it ultimately provided Antioch with its main boulevard.

The network of roads intersecting the plain and linking Antioch to the rest of Syria, along with limited riverine transport on the Orontes, was key to integrating the different communities within this enlarged “urban” system, providing access to the urban markets, and creating what appear to be suburban communities, suspended between the city and the countryside. Some of these sites in the periphery of Antioch were particularly conspicuous: at Narlica (to be possibly identified with ancient Meroe⁶⁷), some 8 km northeast of Antioch, at the juncture where the Orontes meanders as it enters the “corridor” of the city, the skeleton of an impressive noria of the Late Roman/Islamic periods attests to the presence of an ancient site. No ancient building could be more meaningful with its liminality, poised as it is at the very entrance of the vast Amuq Plain. In its vicinity, during June 1938 the Princeton excavations investigated the small yet remarkable mid-fifth century CE Baths of *Apolausis*, conventionally named after the iconic mosaic in the absidal room with the personification of “Enjoyment.” Among the complex’s many pavements, the mosaic of *Soteria* in the octagonal frigidarium is another gripping illustration of a complex that served a suburban community – plausibly that of small villae – and that was attached to a development of much earlier date.⁶⁸ The sophistication of its décor combined with the ingenuity of the design – as made manifest by the aforementioned frigidarium and the absidal room, plausibly a cold pool – declare their affiliation to the bath culture of the city. Yet its setting, modest proportions, and plausible connection to other agglomerations nearby noted by the AVRPA archaeological survey in 2002, may illustrate the characteristics of a typical bath establishment in a village located on the fringes of the city. The haste of the excavation, however, precludes any further analysis. In its environs, however, AVRPA also recorded a block with a cross carved in relief as well as a monumental structure that had been heavily bulldozed by illicit digging; the ceramics in its environs cumulatively dated the complex to the first century CE. Much more modest rural nucleations like small farms or simple seasonal encampments punctuated the road at greater distances from the city.

Substantial settlement near the city was also stimulated by yet another crucial highway, Antioch–Nicopolis–Samosata (modern Antakya–Islayhiye–Samsat) which ran parallel to the Amanus Mt. and connected a series of nodal points connecting Cilicia and Anatolia. Conspicuous settlements measuring 200×100 m like AS 243 in the fourth century replaced several smaller abandoned Hellenistic and Roman sites (AS 241 and 242), suggesting that this new occupation was a consolidation taking advantage of its prominent location on the route. The road appears to have spurred settlement in the northern Amuq Plain, especially, in the marshy Karasu Valley. What were once elusively occupied settlements during the Hellenistic period gained density and strategic importance during the Early Roman empire on account of the infrastructure of new roads to support the region's heavy traffic of soldiers.

The responses to Parthian and Sasanian crises were for centuries devised in Antioch, and the Antioch–Nicopolis–Germanicia road was critical for the rapid deployment of the Syrian legions to bases like Samosata and Mitylene. In this light, the installation of AS 190, a small fort of approximately square plan, measuring 64×64 m, is crucial (Figure 3.1).⁶⁹ Possibly to be interpreted as a *quadribugium*, a structure typically associated with important arteries of traffic, its presence must be connected with the nearby Antioch–Nicopolis–Samosata road. Although the archaeological record at the site indicates heavy occupation during the Early Islamic period – as evinced by the presence of annexes and baths – one should not discount that the structure may be originally situated in the cultural horizon of the post-tetrarchic age, when structures of that size became the norm in the militarization of the Greek East.

In more general terms, it must be underscored that the first settlements in the Karasu Valley appeared during the middle Hellenistic period. Boz Höyük (AS 4) is one such example. It was first occupied in the second century BCE, as demonstrated by fragments of Megarian bowls and other contemporary materials, measuring less than one hectare in area. Around this Hellenistic enclave a much larger community organically expanded over the site starting in the early first century CE and continued into the second and third centuries. Although the area exhibits frequent basalt outcroppings, this valley enjoyed a high degree of fertility upon which various communities capitalized during the High Empire. These sites invariably display a tendency toward the reoccupation of mounds and higher ground settlement, probably in response to the fluctuations of the course of the Karasu river. Despite being less drastic than those recorded for the Afrin, the effects of the Karasu's fluctuations were nevertheless serious for the communities settled there. Most sites east of the Karasu exhibit a continuum of use that extends into the Late Roman period. Whether this evidence can positively be harnessed to propose an “early” date for the road is a reasonable hypothesis.



3.13. Roman Settlement in the Amuq Valley

5 THE LATE ROMAN PERIOD

The picture of settled, aggregated life in the Amuq Plain, exploiting the region's complicated hydrology to maximize its agricultural output reached its critical point in as early as the second century CE. The transformation of the plain's morphology, the diminishing of agricultural productivity, the consolidation of many of the villages in the hands of private property led to fundamental alterations of the original ecosystems. Vast marsh deposits burying Early Roman settlements north of the Lake of Antioch⁷⁰ bear witness to these gradual transformations. With much of the Karasu and Afrin Valleys consisting of expanding wetlands, the local communities were not slow in developing strategies of survival. By the second and third centuries CE, evidence from a

handful of inscriptions from the Syrian Jibāl implies that a non-descript, humdrum movement of families, veterans, and entrepreneurs began to explore the highlands framing the plain for new sustenance. In the fourth century CE, settlement in the Amuq Plain and the surrounding foothills and uplands reached its height, with sites dotting every sizable pocket of the landscape, from the Lake of Antioch to the heights of the Jibāl.

It is worth to return to Wilkinson's previous poignant description on the impact of human agencies on the ecology of the valley's uplands. The increase of upland settlement produced a cascade of negative effects such as soil-nutrient depletion and erosion, and, not least, aggradation on the plain with further enlargement of the lake. For many, the highlands of the Amuq appeared an economically viable alternative to the plain's diminishing returns. And it is plain that the growth of the lake and surrounding marshes escalated at the end of the Late Roman period and into the Early Islamic period.⁷¹ This is based on several findings: the occurrence of Late Roman ceramics on beach ridges at the perimeter of the lake, canals built in the Late Roman period as described by Libanius and attested by the AVRPP data, and the erosion susceptibility created by upland settlement and cultivation. While this combination of evidence is suggestive, it is reasonable to assume that during the Late Roman period seasonal inundations of the plain already contributed to the flooding of certain canals and settlements. Not only had upland settlement and cultivation, and canal building in the plain been in full force since the Roman period, but in the Arpalı pits near Ceylanlı (AS 287), and in the Bağras Valley there is also evidence of alluvial fans with gravel deposits covering Hellenistic through Late Roman architectural strata.⁷² For many, relocation on the uplands of the Amuq Valley represented a viable –if not the only – response to an environment that proved increasingly more instable. What is more, a burgeoning olive oil economy offered further stimuli to these communities.

Moreover, the changing patterns of settlement in Antioch's territory also caused many small towns to acquire further prominence and size. Imma and Gindarus were part of a system of villages spanning the Amuq Plain and Syrian Jibāl that witnessed keen development.

All in all, this momentous transformation of the landscape of Antioch is witnessed by the sample of archaeological sites recorded by AVRPP: the percentage of occupied sites from the Early Roman to Late Roman periods in the plain of Antioch drops from 72% to 47% by the fourth century CE. Villages in the Orontes, Afrin, and Karasu Valleys simply disappeared. Furthermore, only 3.5 % of the Late Roman sites consisted of new foundations.

Thus, at the dawn of Late Antiquity we can model the Amuq Valley through a three-tiered pattern: (1) the reduction and consolidation of villages in the plain into fewer sites, gravitating along main traffic arteries, canals, and

causeways; (2) the expansion of settlement in the highlands; and (3) the consolidation of a web of small towns.

Lest a picture of environmental determinism take the upper hand, it is important to remember that the communities scattered about the Amuq Plain were the main engines behind the spreading of upland sites and land use in the fifth and sixth centuries, mainly in the densely settled limestone hills to the east of Antioch. The small urban centers on the fringes of the plain performed as nodal points in the regional network of roads; their profile, however, changed, all the more as they began to operate more independently by becoming loci of independent local micro-economies.⁷³ The case of Imma and its market, filtered through the eyes of Theodoret as he tells the story of Palladius, a most virtuous “athlete of Christ,” is particularly revealing.⁷⁴ The elements of the story include a wealthy merchant who is murdered after having conducted some substantial business, throngs of onlookers who rally in support of the merchant from a market that allegedly drew visitors from “anywhere,” and of course, a prodigy which adds a religious climax to the anecdote. Whether seasonal or fixed, the market at Imma catered to both communities on the plain and in the highlands, thus offering an alternative to Antioch’s distant markets and subverting the tenet of the city’s economic centrality. Communities like Imma, a hybrid between a small urban community and a large rural nucleation⁷⁵ were the new engines in the economy of the valley.

The alleged self-sufficiency of Antioch’s country in the fourth century CE cannot be measured with quantitative data, let alone statistics. Yet, it may have been grounded in the economic opportunities and new commercial outlets that foci like Imma provided to their catchments, be it Meleagrum or Gindarus, another community in the Antiochene that, according to Theodoret, bore the lofty title of *κώμη μεγίστη*.⁷⁶ The latter site is of great interest: poised in the upper Afrin Valley and straddling a mound inhabited during the Middle Bronze Age, it showcases a grid that plausibly harks back to the Hellenistic era (Figure 3.14). Furthermore, Gindarus’ Caesarian time-reckoning system ascribes beyond doubt this community to the territory of Antioch,⁷⁷ a criterion of distinction that will be brought into focus in the next chapter.

The town’s heyday, however, can be safely assigned to a period from the fourth to mid-fifth century, when much of the Tell and adjacent plain were in use, as attested by the Late Antique domestic architecture in the “Area I.” In addition, the incidence of Late Roman fine and brittle wares across the site does confirm this evidence. Interestingly, a conspicuous courtyard complex – only partially excavated – that occupied the northern sector of town, hints at the existence of a grid of large-scale architecture.⁷⁸ What role the building played can only be a matter of guesswork: public, military, or some kind of a warehouse, as the excavators suggest. Be that as it may, Gindarus brings once



3.14. Gindarus: the Tell and the urban grid

again testimony to the widespread flurry of building activity that invested lesser towns in the Amuq Valley at the beginning of Late Antiquity.

It is tempting, therefore, to infer that other small towns may have had their own respective markets and fairs – many of which may have been grounded in religious festivals⁷⁹ – as the region’s economic gravitas gradually shifted away from the plain deep into the highlands, and not least into the limestone hills to the southeast of the city. In so doing, Antioch’s economic pendulum revised the symbiotic relationship of town and country that had been hitherto the hallmark of the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods.

But, it is still worthwhile to keep the focus on the Amuq Plain and investigate the phenomenon of reduction and consolidation of the number of villages and farms as manifest in the archaeological record. Survey data is such that discrete accumulations of ceramics and traces of masonry impair overly sophisticated narratives of settlement. Nor do they enable far-fetched hypotheses about surplus production, downturns, illicit extraction and other coercive activities that were the “norm” in the landscape of Antioch.⁸⁰ Local farmers had to constantly reckon with requisitions for lodging and supplies, often carried out by officials and soldiers, and there is no need to underscore the traumatic effects that this type of extortion had on villages not only in the territory of Antioch, but all over the province. Governors implicitly encouraged officials and soldiers to perpetrate all sorts of abuses and bribes by their own example, from the illicit activities of Varus in Syria during his 6–4 BCE tenure down to the roster of rapacious administrators in the days of Libanius.⁸¹ In any case, the archaeological data makes it now possible to model the trends in the Amuq Plain against the background of expansion of larger estates. Smaller holdings and often entire villages were incorporated at the hands of urbanites of curial origin, the city’s administrators and the wealthy landowning

families who controlled urban markets.⁸² The absorption of land that previously belonged to villages and independent farms was a typical component of Late Roman landscapes by and large,⁸³ and Antioch was no exception. The many *epoikia* that are attested in the western Antiochene and on the Jibāl since the tetrarchic period, landed properties identified by anthroponyms and boundary markers may plausibly capture this phenomenon.⁸⁴ All the same, in his authoritative study on the city at the time of Libanius, W. Liebeschuetz produces a gripping snapshot of a distressed peasantry, balanced as it was between quasi-slavery tenancy schemes and bold independence claims.⁸⁵ Of course an entire range of nuances existed between these two extremes; it is apparent though that at the time of Libanius, when rural settlement on the highlands was in its momentum, the overall picture of settlement in the plain of Antioch was undergoing major structural changes.⁸⁶ To be sure, a good portion of private property must have gradually fallen into the hands of a newly aggressive landed aristocracy, and there's no reason to argue against the dominant trend in this period, corroborated as it is, by the words of Libanius. But, the bleak panorama of the plain of Antioch – canvassed by Liebeschuetz and Weulersse before him – devoid of settlement, owned by absentee landlords, and essentially populated by farmers commuting to and from the city, must be now called into question.⁸⁷ What is more, this dismissal of a dense mesh of sites on the plain here presented has also led to formulating the rhetoric of the “Dead Cities,” that is the villages on the Syrian Jibāl, as an apparently detached, floating unit, connected to Antioch only by means of roads. How this predicate is no longer tenable is the issue that we shall tackle in the following chapter.

It is plain though that the archaeological record of the Amuq Plain reverses these hypotheses, and shows the consolidation and increase of larger sites. The enlargement of several foci in tandem with the incidence of African wares as well as later Phocian wares, provide the chronological framework for these processes. The data suggest that the economic strategies of urban and rural agencies that had shaped this valley for centuries were only partially replaced by the expansion of estates as fueled by this new aristocracy. Nor were these estates situated necessarily in the environs of the city only; rather, a number of well-to-do city folks had a penchant for locations as far as Cilicia and Judea, and even more in the vicinity around the city of Cyrrhus, in the lower Afrin Valley.⁸⁸

6 THE VIEW FROM ANTIOCH

The fifth century CE *House of Ge and the Seasons* (Figure 3.15), excavated in 1935 in Daphne hardly figures among the best known of the houses excavated by the Princeton team.⁸⁹

In harmony with what may appear as an Antiochene tradition of domestic architecture, this suite consisted of the juxtaposition of various locales plausibly connected by a spatial sequence. In an effort to lift its pavements, and rapidly deploy the “mosaic team” elsewhere, this house was hastily dug. Hence, the stratigraphic sequence was poorly understood, and the scant records inhibit a safe reconstruction of the archaeological context. Altogether, at the site the archaeologists identified two main phases of occupation and a beautifully decorated large room framed by a pool and apse. Notably, its mosaic floor fused a common geometric pattern with four



3.15. One of the panels from the *House of Ge* (Princeton Art Museum)

round medallions – *emblemata*—representing the seasons. The centerpiece of the representation was the personification of *Ge* (the Land), crowned with fruits, donned in a purple tunic and boasting a cornucopia. Much has been said by modern scholarship on the significance of Antioch’s abstract personifications as they appear in the archaeological record; although it is accepted that the apex of their popularity is in the fourth and fifth centuries, their cultural implications are still matter of dispute.⁹⁰ While most visual allegories as in the case of *Aion*,⁹¹ may have expressed what Levi poignantly described as “dispositions of the mind,” other were more concrete and rather grounded into the economic outlook of their patrons. Such were visual personifications of *Ktisis* (foundation, possession) and, indeed, *Ge*. From the prominent, verdant terraces of Daphne the Orontes Valley and the Amuq Plain unfolded as one gazed at the North: a vast expanse of land that signified the welfare of the Antiochenes. No choice of a central medallion could be more meaningful for a household that –like many others– had been built and sustained by the bounty of the land. It celebrated the generative and constantly evolving character of this landscape and, more subtly, the folks who inhabited and tilled it from the days of the Seleucid foundation. Their villages and farms increased in shape and numbers through the Roman era, and indeed they reflected the synchronic political and physical growth of Antioch. Yet, such a dense rural settlement never masked its Hellenistic nucleus and original configuration, expressed as it were by the nomenclature of its administrators⁹² and the lingering of Seleucid communities. Not even a fundamental concoc-tion of political and environmental factors did change this territory’s essential quality, its being a Seleucid relic. More to the point, the environmental and social changes in the plain of Antioch during the fourth and fifth centuries, it seems, were couched in the synchronic transformation of the urban politics.

Here, the landed aristocracy of old, burdened by the *munera* in the service of the city and the state shrank considerably during the first half of the fourth century; it is assumed that from ranking approximately 600 members under Constantine it downsized to 60 in the days of Theodosius I.⁹³ The widespread recalcitrance to undergo the pressures of the imperial administration and ensuing desertion of the curiales were palliated by the enlisting of 200 new members under Julian and volunteering in exchange of military dispense.⁹⁴ More fundamentally though, the erosion of the old prerogatives of the city councilors coincided with the emergence of the *honorati*, notables exempted from performing the typical obligations of the curiales, and slowly raising to civic and imperial prominence.⁹⁵ These rampant *homines novi* could hardly boast the long lineage of the old aristocracy; only did a mix of mythical ancestors and military commanders helped them conceal their unimpressive origins.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, they were quick in impacting the urban environment in the usual, traditional ways: in the early fifth century CE, Mamianus, a former artisan raised to senatorial dignity sponsored the construction of colonnades, a tetrapylon, and statues at Antioch and Daphne, it seems.⁹⁷ We have reason to believe that equally effective was their ability in appropriating land assets from city councilors, now incapable to curb the widespread military patronage of the peasantry and to levy taxes. Control of the urban markets, however, still remained a prerogative of the latter group, for most crops and grain were hoarded and sold by a minority of dealers with the compliance of the local administration.⁹⁸ The steady inflow of crops and goods from the land to the city markets and shops along the colonnaded street must have been a most common sight to any Antiochene. Consigneers and street merchants would then have placed their goods upon stalls, thus starting the daily routine of throngs of market-goers treading the streets. With the population of the city surging to some 500,000 inhabitants, the daily flow of commodities and goods making their way into the city must have been staggering.

This idyllic picture had its finite limits, too. It was during this age that environmental changes, specifically erosion brought about by intensive cultivation over the entire landscape and deforestation, intensified the problem of the Amuq marshlands. When paired with drought or crop-failures these same environmental changes put Antioch under great strain inasmuch as the city was dependent on the Amuq Plain for its sustenance. And, problems arose when the overall yield was not satisfactory; dealers would withdraw the product and increase the price, communities would suffer, and riots would quickly ensue.⁹⁹ Several examples from the Greek East corroborate this trend, and Antioch was clearly no exception to the rule.¹⁰⁰ A staggering series of food crises tied to the aforementioned motives affected Antioch during the fourth century. What is more, the notorious downturns of AD 333 vividly narrated by Theophanes

and, worse still, that of AD 363,¹⁰¹ demanded drastic remedies by the emperors themselves, and brought into focus the endemic vulnerability of these urban economies as well as the limits of a city in which a minority, clinging to ancestral practices, owned most of the land and manipulated the markets for their own profit.

Once again, it is striking to see how Antioch remained organically connected to this vast landscape, regardless of its morphological and social modifications. The conservative character of the city's economy in the fourth century, however, was at odds with climate of renovation that reverberated in a series of ambitious civic overhauls. More to the point, germane to the modification of its administrative apparatus was the appearance of a new, distinctive veneer. Under the mandate of Theodosius II a new system of walls on Mt. Silpius and Staurin redesigned Antioch's defenses, and heralded the renewal of large-scale imperial patronage.¹⁰² The conflation of masonry techniques and chronologies present a formidable challenge in unraveling agencies, builders, and techniques, as already noted in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, recent archaeological surveys show that the new fortification sought to reconcile its configuration with that of the previous phase, the so-called Walls of Tiberius. A site called Rhodion, in the vicinity of the Phyrminus gorge was the locus where the two fortification systems merged, according to Malalas. What is more, new developments in the southern sector of the city may have served well the swollen community. With the Forum of Valens serving as a pivotal point for the "Old City," renewed attention was accorded to the Island, now raised to the status of the heart of the city and connected to the former via a wide east-west boulevard, as the excavations in the 17-O sector sought to prove.¹⁰³ But, much renovation and optimism were short-lived. Once again, calamities took their toll on the city of Seleukos Nikator. Commenting upon the damage of an earthquake in AD 458, Evagrius noted:

*Now this quake overthrew almost all buildings of the New City, which was very heavily populated and had no empty or totally neglected space, but rather had been extraordinarily adorned by the liberality of emperors who competed with each other.*¹⁰⁴

Ruins were a probable feature of the cityscape during the fourth and fifth centuries. Relentless construction, setting up of scaffolding and constant pounding of hammers must have been typical features of Antioch in those days. Even the implementation of the Theodosian walls no doubts brought about its own share of destruction of preexisting sites, as reported by John Malalas. But, poor maintenance of buildings and the effects of quakes offered countless opportunities for new construction. Although impossible to situate in space, the incessant constructions sponsored by governors and *honorati* left a

profound imprint on the city, and bore witness to the slipping away of public building activities in the hands of a new crop of imperial administrators, by the names of Zoilus, Callistus, and Anatolius, to cite but three.¹⁰⁵ Charged with an austere sense of authority, their *stoai* forged new foci in the city, signaling their whims and ambitions. And, the effects of their activities could be felt vividly miles from the city center.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HIGHLANDS OF ANTIOCH

In Chapter 3 we examined Antioch's expansion into the Amuq Plain *as a whole*. Economic and environmental pressures galvanized the increase of Antioch's rural settlements starting in the Early Roman empire. What emerged from the archaeological data was an increase of the settled area in the Amuq Plain and the gradual occupation of new expanses of land on the hitherto untapped mountainous districts of the Amanus Mt. and limestone Jibāl, an area referred to in early surveys as the "Massif Calcaire." In this chapter we will focus on these *two particular areas* of that wider region. Their archaeological autopsy presented here has a threefold purpose: first, it aims at illustrating the settlement patterns and decision-making that determined the appearance of new foci. Second, it seeks to answer the basic question: how far did the territory of Antioch extend? Third, it purports to eliminate the divide between lowlands and uplands, one which has dominated the scholarship of the region for decades.

I THE AMANUS, (NUR DAĞLARI)

Other than representing the eastern boundary of Antioch's territory, the Amanus has always demarcated the natural boundary between Cilicia and Syria, extending from the district of Maraş all the way down to the promontory of Hinzır Burnu (south of ancient Rhosus), on the Mediterranean, following a northeast-southwest sinuous pattern (Map 3).

Its dramatic gorges, impenetrable appearance, and conspicuous heights – rising to 2224 m a.s.l. with Mt. Casius – have long cast a gloomy aura on the region that lingers to this day, so much so that Arab and Armenian chroniclers altogether referred to the range as the “Black Mountain.”¹ Pockets of brigandage² and legends of demons lurking near springs³ undoubtedly contributed to this reputation, and in turn may have discouraged travel in these mountain areas in antiquity. Travelogues from the nineteenth century greatly drew on this renown:

*It is worthy to note that the inhabitants of these mountains have had, from the earliest times the same rough, lawless, character that they have now. . . . At present they are so thoroughly subdued that a traveler can go unarmed anywhere in the mountains with perfect safety.*⁴

However, even today allegations of armed political activism seek to deter travelers from visiting these remarkable mountains (Figure 4.1).

In spite of its reputation for lawlessness in antiquity, this mountain range was home to some of Antioch’s most important ancestral cults,⁵ attracting caravans of pilgrims, not to mention imperial armies. And, indeed, mobility and settlement were very much hallmarks of this region, from the days of Sargon to the Ottoman times.

In antiquity, the majority of the Amanus Mountains, just like other highlands of the Fertile Crescent supported a mantle of dense woodlands: they



4.1. The Amanus Mt. from the west, near the Beylan Pass

consisted of alpine forest, Mediterranean *sclerophyllous* woodland, and deciduous oak.⁶ Intensive agriculture, erosion and substantial deforestation carried out for centuries, however, have profoundly altered the ecological configuration of these highlands. Of course, Antioch's demand for fuel and building materials should not be overlooked. The woods of the Amanus represented a formidable resource, and as such one can speculate that they were integrated within the economic framework of Antioch, according to a modality widespread in Asia: the example of Aphrodisias, bound to its adjacent mountain zones, and claiming ownership to a constellation of villages is a good case in point.⁷

Opportunism, mobility, and resources thus spearheaded the genesis of micro-mountain societies, and opened paths in the apparently impenetrable environments of the Amanus. But the growth of Antioch and its various industries in antiquity exacted a hefty toll on the Amuq Valley's ecosystems; the forests on the Amanus and its piedmont, in particular, were a fundamental resource for timber and fuel. Cedar (*Cedrus libani*) was no doubt the most coveted resource in the Amanus landscape. Now almost entirely gone, cedar was from the neo-Assyrian period a valuable source for the supplying of a fleet as well as a great source for exotic ointments.⁸ Two inscriptions honoring Zeus Ouranios,⁹ a deity closely associated with the Seleucid kings – as attested by various mint issues under Antiochos IV, among others¹⁰ – bear witness to the significance of these mountain districts for Hellenistic Antioch. Moreover, these documents illustrate the presence of trails and axes of communication that breached the chain and represented viable alternatives to the three main passes of Beylan, Ceylanlı, and Arsanlı Bel, which connected the Amuq to the Cilician coast. Of these three, the Beylan Pass was, and still is, the most accessible travel route. The archaeological surveys conducted by Bahadır Alkım in the vicinity of Kırkhan and in the northern Amuq Valley corroborate this hypothesis:¹¹ a mesh of pathways connected the basalt fields of the Kurt Dağ to the Cilician shores, thereby linking communities and resources as early as the second millennium BCE.

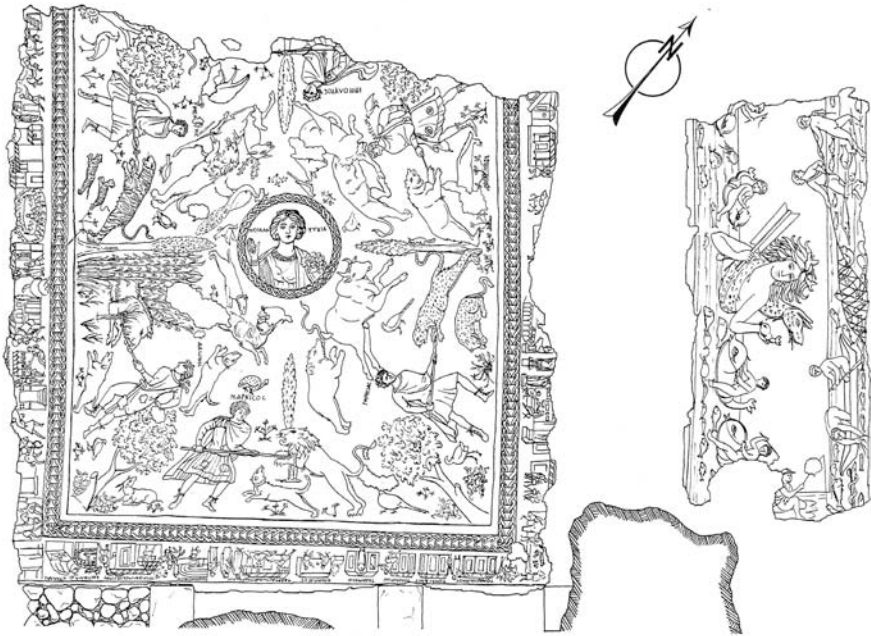
As for the sustainability of the Amanus' wood resources, we should not dismiss the possibility that some form of woodland management existed from as early as Roman times, especially geared toward the preservation of the high cedar of the Amanus. The case of the imperial estate that at the times of Hadrian managed a vast section of the anti-Lebanon chain between Berytus and Tripolis, the aim of which was plausibly grounded into the rational exploitation of its cedars, juniper and pine trees is well known.¹² Markers and boundary stones advertised the imperial ownership over a vast tract of the northwestern versant of Mt. Lebanon and were designed to protect the cedar resources, threatened by new high-altitude settlements that gradually moved away from coastal sites during the early imperial period.¹³ As it turned out,

these provisions succeeded at foiling the depletion of these precious resources: by the time of Justinian a good deal of cedar woods could still be tapped into for the completion of building programs.¹⁴ Even tighter control was probably in place near Sanamein in southern Syria (Hawrān), as attested by an inscription that dates between AD 355 and 360 under the mandate of Julian, honoring the praetorian prefect of the Orient, possibly Strategius Musonianus or Hermogenes. The text mentions a *saltus* – an estate, in this case a forest under imperial jurisdiction – in the region of Batanea; it was administered by an imperial official (*ducenarius*), one Flavius Maximus.¹⁵ From this evidence it appears that the latter – presumably with the help an unknown number of troops – resided within the imperial property at the local *metrokomia* (mother-village), and saw to its maintenance and preservation from the dangers of over-exploitation posed by the many rural communities nearby.¹⁶ That institutional schemes of this sort may have been at work on Antioch's surrounding heights to protect its woods is a cogent possibility. Whether for fuel or timber for construction, these documents suggest that in Syria the woodlands' growth and decline hinged on the delicate balance between human communities and their ecosystems, and on *ad hoc* imperial measures to safeguard resources of critical importance.¹⁷

But the Amanus was not only a great source of cedar; pine (*Abies cilicica*) was also particularly prominent, especially at lower elevations. *Fagus silvatica*, *Juniperus excelsa* and *foeditissima*, *Cornus mas* and *australis*, and *Tilia argentea* also contributed to the physiognomy of the Amanus' canopy. Below the 1,000 m elevation, dense *Quercus cerris*, *Taxus baccata* and *Ostrya carpinifolia* forests can be found, whereas on the Amanus' piedmont – where most of the human settlement was situated – *Cupress sempervirens*, *Salix nigricans*, *Quercus aegilops*, *Platanus orientalis*, and *Populus nigra* loomed large.¹⁸ This variety within the woodlands of the Amanus is also mentioned in accounts by Pliny, Josephus, Cassius Dio and Ammianus Marcellinus.¹⁹ The mountainous ecosystem was also host to a diversity of fauna: *Ursus syriacus*, *Cervus elaphus*, *Vulpes vulpes*, *Panthera pardus*, *Felis tigris*, *Sus scrofa*, and *Pavo cristatus*, to cite but a few.²⁰ Indeed, many a Saint built their fame ridding villages of the wild animals that populated the region around Antioch.

Visual allusions to these animals can be found in the hunting mosaics of fifth century CE Antioch.²¹ Two examples stand out: the *Megalopsychia* pavement (Figure 4.2), lifted from the Yakto context outside Daphne, and the so-called *Worcester Hunt* mosaic, also from Daphne. Whether representing staged hunts or real events, and replete with the visual conventions of the genre, these two pavements serve as visual catalogs of the game that lived in Antioch's environs, while conjuring up practices shared by most Antiochenes.²²

Lastly, the Amanus was also a remarkable source of stone and minerals: quarries and mining operations were in use from ancestral times. From the



4.2. The *Megalopsychia* and *Thetis* pavements from Yakto: the hunting scene and the topographic framework (Levi, *Pavements*)

heavy limestone with which Antioch was built to the delicate red and violet dolomites employed by Antioch's mosaicists, a wealth of resources lay buried among the sedentary rocks of the Amanus.²³ Exploited but not densely settled until the Early Roman period, this area witnessed a sharp increase in the number of settlements that can be understood within the context of the economic opportunities that this landscape offered. Here, discrete pockets of land and intense terracing still signal the presence of human communities and the ways with which they negotiate a complicated setting. How human settlements first sprouted up in the classical period, and how these highland communities were related to the lowlands and the city are the questions at stake.

2 ORCHARDS AND MINES

In their quest for unknown inscriptions, Jalabert and Mouterde visited the piedmont of southeastern Amanus. Near the village of Kumur Tchoukour (today known as Kömürçukuru, 7 km South of Beylan) they encountered a broken funerary inscription of unknown date.²⁴ It appears that one Baradatos son of Diogenes may have been a caretaker of orchards, a form of land exploitation that, as we shall see, was particularly frequent on the steep slopes of the Amanus Mt. The austere text doesn't convey much about him, with the exception of his lofty name, to be translated as "the son of Hadad"

(the ancestral god of Syria). That this same name also identified a well-known Antiochene hermit and a leader in Syrian monasticism mattered little to contemporary Christians, it seems.²⁵ All the same, let us return to the steep slopes of the Amanus where presumably our Baradatos lived. His apparent association with orchards is most telling, as it informs the resilience of these communities and their ability to carve a niche suited to settlement amid a complicated landscape. To Baradatos, the Amanus Mt. was no bleak, hostile landscape; here he was part of communities that were integrated in the ecological and economic networks of the region and that relied on diversified, seasonal, activities. Their engagement in timber farming, grazing, and quarrying, moreover, not only ensured sustainability to their settlements; they also built durable economic ties with Antioch, as we shall see. The opportunism that led Baradatos to venture into this district is thus worth exploring.

A narrative of settlement in the Amanus is impaired by the piecemeal nature of the evidence, and by the admittedly limited archaeological record documented by the AVRП survey combined with earlier, primarily epigraphic, reconnaissance. Nevertheless, scant traces of second millennium BCE occupation – mainly elusive sherd accumulations – suggest that the piedmont and the heights of the Amanus were eschewed in favor of mounded sites on the plain.²⁶ Only in the Seleucid era was the Amanus region in the territory of Antioch valued by virtue of its natural resources: timber, stone, and minerals.

The picture of Hellenistic settlement in the Amanus Mountains (Figure 3.6), although not consisting of more than a handful of sites, merits attention because of the peculiarities that it presents, as well as one conspicuous settlement on the Amanus' piedmont near modern Ceylanlı that is datable to the third century BCE. The questions, however, whether this community – just like that at Pagrae – functioned as an independent town, whether it had its own charters, and what type of relationship it may have had with Antioch remain unresolved. What appears vividly is that the modern village of Ceylanlı lies near a vast nucleation that measures $350 \times 400 \text{ m}^2$ and occupies the plain as starts to rise in elevation. The site presents substantial Roman architectural remains, including a monumental necropolis and traces of an urban grid, as we shall see next. Interestingly, the pottery evidence indicates that the occupation at this site dwindled around the end of the first century BCE and ended by the mid-first century CE. This coincided with the rise of a new settlement further to the north (Roman Meleagrum), on a higher, protected plateau.

Altogether, it is apparent that communities on the Amanus were not exempt from the detrimental effect of seasonal runoffs, requiring the development of a variety of survival strategies. Sections in the Arpađ gravel pits, lying on a large alluvial fan deriving from the Ceylanlı Valley runoff present traces of walls and abundant Hellenistic wares under 4 m of gravel, thus strengthening the picture of runoff contributing to fan aggradation. To this day, substantial

colluvial of clay and humic muds accumulate at the bottom of valleys and gorges that cut through the Amanus, thus signaling the long-term effects of torrential rains, while also burying the archaeological record as alluvial fans.

All of the other Hellenistic sites in the Amanus Mountains measure well under one hectare and typically straddle the piedmont at a height of 500–700 m a.s.l. They thus enjoyed easy access to the plain while also able to exploit the resources of the mountains. Such is the situation of site Soğuksu Höyük (AS 17), adjacent to the Karasu Valley and benefiting from the nearby veins of serpentinite. The one exception to this pattern is Karacaoluk Yaylası (AS 334), a small nucleation at 960 m situated in an alpine-like environment. Surrounded by pine trees and maquis, the settlement was in all likelihood occupied at an early stage, as is demonstrated by the ceramic finds, namely various black-glaze fragments of black glaze *kantharoi* and kraters. The rationale for such an isolated location is probably to be found in a settlement scheme based on a non-sedentary pastoral economy in conjunction with the cultivation of small, terraced parcels of land, attested by substantial remains of terracing walls in this area.

In general, behind the outlines of this sparse highland settlement is a tendency to concentrate communities in the lowlands and in the vicinity of the city, as a result of the occupation schemes that presumably regulated the granting of the land in the Seleucid period. However, the trends that will appear vividly during the Roman period are prefigured by the small establishments localized on the piedmont and in the vicinity of natural resources.

With the geomorphic transformation of the Amuq Plain, and the increase of rural settlement in the Early Roman period, the Amanus was not slow in witnessing the appearance of new foci (Figure 3.13). More to the point, the transverse valleys that cut the Amanus east-west became optimal basins for the imposition of manmade structures. Only apparently divorced from Antioch's urban system, four basins instead attest to the economic sensibility that pervaded these communities. In particular, the Kısıcık, Bakras, Kırkhan, and Ceylanlı Valleys merit further scrutiny.

In the vicinity of Antioch, the area of Kısıcık with its Alpine-like scenery, steep slopes, gorges and dense vegetation of oak, pine and cedar trees may seem to be the least suitable for settlement in the region. Mostly avoided for millennia, this district witnessed the arrival of settlers only at the beginning of the first century CE, when the first system of sites along the local stream is attested archaeologically. This narrow valley is accessible through a winding road that, originating in Antioch, climbs to the considerable elevation of 470 meters above sea level at the site of Kısıcık. While the archaeological record shows traces of occupation from the first century into the Islamic era, what makes this area distinctive is the density of the ore fragments and slag that has been recovered, elements that indicate the presence of an extractive

industry. It was no surprise then that the cores taken in 1996 through the former Amuq Lake deposits showed the presence of copper in the sediments of the basin, as byproduct of the smelting activities that had taken place in the Amanus for centuries.²⁷ Another compelling argument can be found in the traces of open-air quarrying that are evident amid the ultrabasic outcroppings at the site. From the finds, iron, copper, steatite and gold were apparently the resources that determined the occupation of the site. Located on a terrace in a fairly prominent position, this nucleation may have functioned as headquarters for miners involved in the quarrying operations a few hundred meters upstream. The adjacent watercourse would also have been useful for the sluicing operations conducted here, and in particular, in the quest for hematite reefs and boulders. Terraced gardens and orchards may have represented the typical ecological corollary for the sustenance of these communities. Slightly to the south of Kısıcık, in fact, other small related settlements occupied pockets of cultivable land or created cultivable land through the process of terracing. East Kısıcık, by far the largest unit with a size of $110 \times 70 \text{ m}^2$, occupied a rocky terrace overlooking one of the gorges that are so characteristic of this district. The aggregate evidence indicates the presence of several terraced fields, probably relics of the long-term usage of this landscape, as well as substantial traces of ancient building activity on the site: tiles, pipes and architectural remains that can be tentatively dated to the first century CE based on ceramic evidence. Other nucleations also conform to this trend, although their setting is similar to that of the previous site with fewer architectural remains; these pottery collections offer a slightly earlier horizon, pointing to a late first century BCE occupation for these villages. It is also quite likely that these high elevation sites were instrumental in collecting logging and floating downstream the wood, taking advantage of the torrential regime of streams in the fall and spring. While the textual evidence about these practices dates essentially to the tenth century and later,²⁸ it is safe to infer that these systems were probably in place long before the Romans.

With a much gentler environment than the Kısıcık district, the Bakras Valley offered better overall settlement conditions for the various communities. A network of trails and rural routes also contributed to the urbanization of the region, also referred to in antiquity as the *Pagrika Ore*.²⁹ The mouth of the valley was dominated by a large multi-phase settlement that later became part of the Islamic Karamurt Khan,³⁰ still visible on satellite imagery at the time of the AVRIP reconnaissance. A great number of sites emerged in the Pagrae area in the first and second centuries CE, located on the Amanus piedmont and its foothills: they are all extremely small, averaging less than one hectare in size, and are set on alluvial terraces at the entrance of the Bağras Valley. There seems to be no doubt as to the agricultural use of these sites that are oriented toward the exploitation of terraced land on gently sloping foothills. An

overshot water mill system that tapped water from the nearby stream is a particularly noteworthy element from one of these settlements. Although the terminus of this system evidently underwent several changes and restorations over time that kept the mill functioning until the Ottoman period, it is possible to assign the earliest phase of its apparatus to the original settlement, as it is evident that the community grew around it, plausibly shared it, thus heightening their social interactions. Hydraulic technologies and works of this scale were also in use further to the north near Bakras Kale (Figure 3.10), where an aqueduct that fed a reservoir near the Middle Byzantine and Armenian Castle was still visible as late as the 1930s.³¹

The Beylan Valley owes its name and fame to the Beylan Pass, a key route connecting the Mediterranean with the Levant: it was traditionally known as the “Syrian Gates.” A road over the pass must have long predated the classical period,³² yet it is plausible that its importance in Roman times grew in concert with the necessity to enhance and accelerate transports between Antioch and the harbor of Alexandria ad Issum in Cilicia, especially in the pre-Flavian phase of Syria when the harbor of Seleucia had yet to become the main port and docks. A fragmentary inscription recovered near the modern village of Beylan may mention the setting up of an arch at the time of Augustus; whether this commemoration occurred in tandem with the paving and enlargement of the road is a possibility.³³ Be that as it may, the heightening of traffic, movement, and services for travelers may have stimulated settlement in the area. The site of Cakalli Karakol (AS 246) some fifty meters north of the modern village of Beylan merits particular attention. Here, a mounded nucleation of considerable size (280 × 150 sq.m) attests to a settlement that was adjacent to the main highway, seemingly grew in the Early Roman period and may be identified with the *Mutatio Platanus* in the Bordeaux Itinerary.³⁴ The considerable area of the site, located in the vicinity of the modern village of and situated on a limestone hill overlooking the road, shows dense settlement during the early empire. Although some materials of the second and early first centuries BCE are present, the majority of the ceramics offer a wide spectrum of vessels and wares of the first and second centuries CE. These same characteristics are shared by a group of smaller sites to the south. Measuring an average of 50 m², these units are among the smallest in the Amuq Valley and typify the settlement pattern that took place at low elevations, with easy access to important routes and terraced land holdings for the maintenance of these communities. Interestingly, one site in the lower valley (AS 245) deviates slightly from this template, as it presents linear cuts and bevels in the rocky hill that signal the quarrying that was in all likelihood carried out for a local extractive industry. To be sure, the constant expansion of the city of Antioch and its suburbs and the frequent restorations and new building programs implemented by the emperors demanded a constant flow of building materials

like the limestone excavated at this very site. Small industries of this nature could thus be instrumental to the realization of these urban plans of construction. Perhaps here in this sub-region we can locate the elusive Apate, one of the many villages mentioned in the Life of St. Simeon the Younger. Apparently, this community consisted of Isaurian stone-cutters and carpenters, whose craftsmanship had been key to the construction of Antioch's city walls.³⁵ That the walls in object are the fortifications of Justinian it is most forthright; less so is the exact location of the Isaurian establishment. The ethnic "Isaurian," however, was typically associated with "unruly" communities that populated the Amanus and that didn't seem to conform to Graeco-Roman customs. It can be safely surmised that one of these was located on the eastern flank of the relief, overlooking the Amuq Plain, and in the distance, Antioch.

The tendency to seize the rolling foothills at relatively low elevations, and thereby establish farms and living units less than 500 m above sea level was not, however, the only settlement scheme in this sector of the Amanus Mountains.

Moving northwest along the Amanus Mountain range, another area that merits examination is the Kırkhan Valley. Although cursorily investigated by archaeologists, this basin exhibits settlement trends that run counter to the patterns thus far delineated. Two sites out of the three identified in this valley are situated at the considerable altitudes of 909 and 960 m above sea level, respectively, and occupy rocky plateaus where the only vegetation consists of maquis and sporadic nut trees. Traces of terracing are prominent on these extremely rocky highlands with just a few centimeters of topsoil, suggesting the tenacity of the communities that lived there. But there is more here than the eye meets. The settlement at Karacaoluk Yaylası (AS 334) still exhibits an orthogonal ground plan to which various buildings conform, to the point that they can be virtually traced on the ground. That it served as a seasonal retreat for use during the hottest months of the year, much as the modern yaylas (camp sites on highland pastures) are used, is one possibility. Also, more crisp is the picture of settlement at a lower elevation farther to the south, near the very entrance to the valley. A site near Karataş is particularly revealing: middle-sized (175 × 50 sq. m), this nucleation was in all likelihood a farm with an associated olive oil production facility. Unfortunately, both the presence of modern buildings and destruction that had occurred at the site prevents an estimate of its size and hence its potential productivity. Late Roman fortified sites with what appear to be pressing facilities were also found in the mountains above Kırkhan, (near AS 334) – high above olive and vine producing elevations – and yielded evidence of Late Roman pottery. Although it could be speculated that these establishments may have been seasonal retreats, they might also have been associated with transhumant communities, thus serving as a seasonal campsite. Nearby Kale Tepe (AS 336) was in all likelihood equipped with a tower-house comprising a square building (4 × 4 m) of large ashlar masonry

with a perimeter wall, comparable to contexts noted by Butler in central and southern Syria at Kfellusin and Serjible.³⁶ While the defensive role of these tower-houses is now discounted, it is probable – as Michael Decker suggests – that they may have served as habitation and refuge for people and animals altogether.³⁷ In an isolated environment exposed to raids from bandits, however, security would have played a role in the setting up of these unique buildings. Notably, an adaptation of this built environment appears in the bucolic vignettes that framed the pavements of the so-called Constantinian Villa excavated in 1935 by the Princeton expedition in Daphne and dating to the fourth century CE (Figure 4. 3).

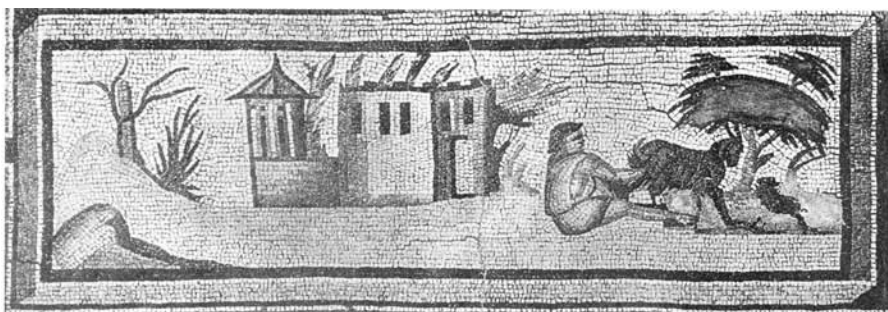
The extolling of pastoral life and representations of idyllic landscapes reiterate visual conventions that are well known among North African mosaics and Pompeian frescoes. Yet the inclusion of the farms is of interest. Two of the three houses in the panels present a modest, rectangular shape with a gabled roof. A third one, however, stands out because of a round pavilion-like structure with conical roof juxtaposed to the walls of the building. It can be suggested that in the intentions of the artist this was meant to represent a tower-house, just like that at Kale Tepe.

Next to the Kırkhan Valley is one of the most interesting and heavily urbanized districts in the Amuq, the Ceylanlı Valley. As with the Bakras/Beylan district, the settlement forces that established new foci in this sector cannot be divorced from the artery that ran from Antioch to Germanicia and Nicopolis. Three sites situated on the piedmont at the entrance to the valley need to be brought into sharper focus.

The large Hellenistic nucleation near the modern village of Gündüzlü/Karamağara on the colluvial fan descending from the Amanus Mountains was mentioned earlier. Here, the reports of Fossey and Perdrizet in the late nineteenth century emphasized the presence of scattered antiquities that allegedly long predated the classical phase:

*What makes this hill interesting is the great diversity of the archaeological finds, from the days of the old Syrian age, that which is referred to as “Hittite”, to the Greco-Roman epoch. It’s as if the rocks of Kara-Moughara had been an ancestral locus for a unique veneration, suitable for both sacrifice and burial.*³⁸

Here, recent surveys found no traces of these neo-Hittite reliefs, nor accumulations of ceramics that would suggest a pre-classical phase for the site. What is more, the reliefs as drawn by the two travelers can be reasonably ascribed to the iconography of stelae of the Zeus Dolichenus type, presumably of middle imperial age.³⁹ The so-called God of Storms basalt stele from Kurcuoğlu Höyük southeast of Kırkhan, now at the Antakya museum, is a prime example of this kind of art heavy with neo-Hittite allusions, and yet imbued in the religious tradition of the region during the Roman period (Figure 4.4).⁴⁰



a



b



c



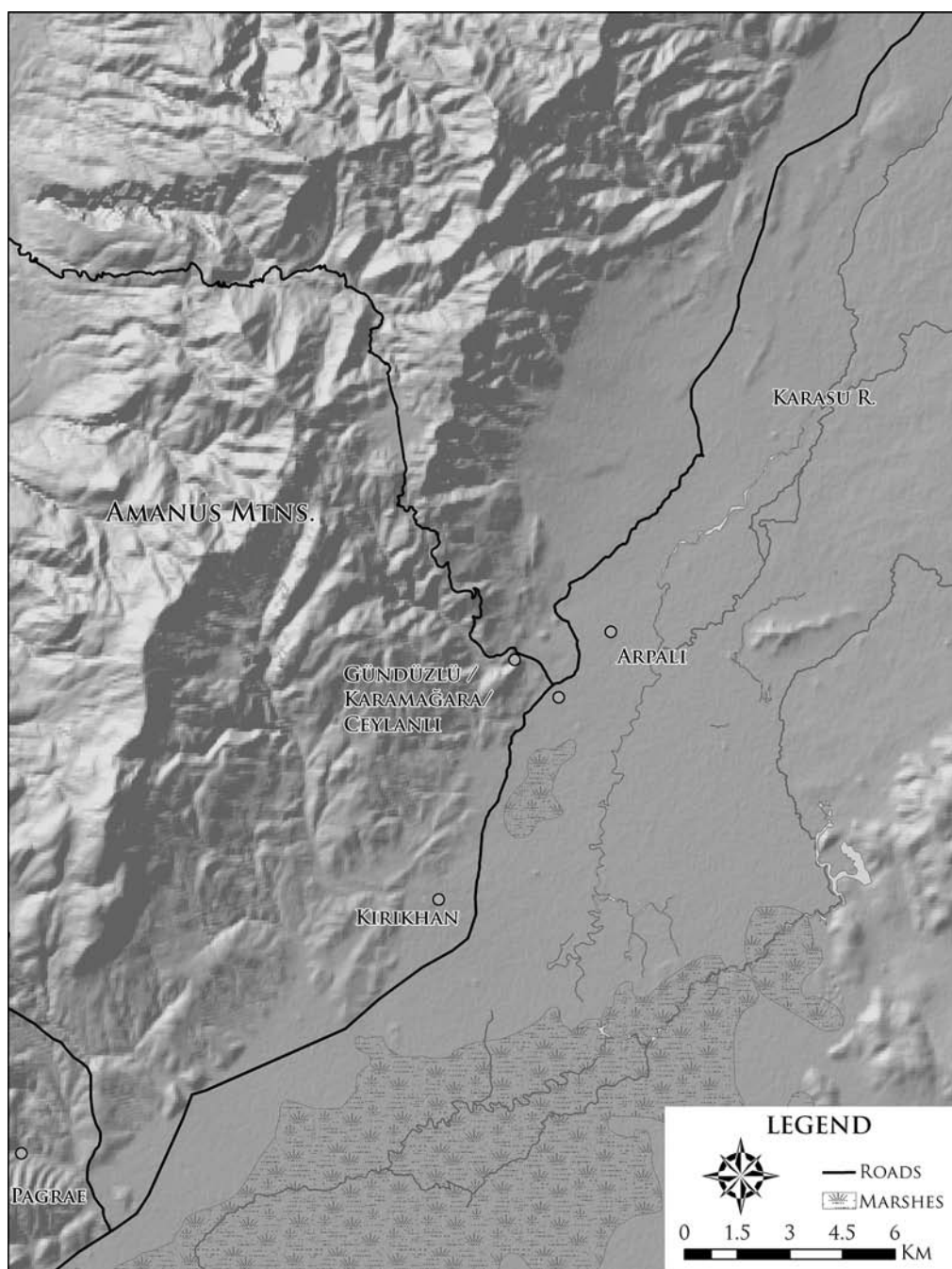
4.3. The Constantinian Villa, Room 1: the pastoral panels of the border

The god stands on two bulls while wielding an axe and arrows. The treatment of the face, beard and headdress allude to the neo-Hittite visual tradition, while his garb resembles the tunic and *pteruges* of the Roman legions. Fundamentally, though, the ruins and visual culture of ancient cities like Zincirli, as well as the ancient basalt quarries and workshops at Yesemek in the Kurt Dağ in the northern districts of the Amuq Valley, no doubt contributed to the forging of an aesthetic style unique to the communities who lived in the Amanus region, and essential in forging the iconography of these deities. The appeal and overall significance of these artifacts in the religious landscape of the region remains to be determined.



4.4. The Zeus Dolichenus stele

The sequence of occupation of Gündüzlü/Karamağara embraces a fairly wide span and is generally understood to have started in the second century BCE (Map 4). Architectural fragments, especially ashlar blocks unevenly distributed about the site, as well as a water mill are the most tangible signs of occupation; the archeological record, however, does not seem to continue beyond the Early Roman imperial phase. The highly abraded condition of the sherds collected, often buried under meters of gravel sediment, suggests that floods provoked the abandonment of the site in favor of a location at a higher elevation upstream. These criteria are, incidentally, met by a site further north in the valley, now obscured by modern Ceylanlı (AS 287); it emerged at the moment that its southern counterpart was gradually going out of use, perhaps on account of torrential floods caused by streams coming down the Amanus, as is indicated by the thick deposit of gravel that buries portions of the site. Be this as it may, modern Ceylanlı proved to be difficult to survey since modern development hampered a systematic investigation. Nonetheless, the many fragments of mills, oil presses and column drums that are visible in the village leave no doubt about their provenience. A few patches of unexploited land permitted a small collection of ceramics to be gathered that point to occupation between the first century BCE and the fifth century CE. But the most conspicuous feature is the nearby necropolis,⁴¹ which consists of a field of ruins and debris, where fragments of statues and sarcophagi could still be seen until the 1930s,⁴² as well as a series of rock-cut tombs on the mountain spur above the plain (Figure 4.5).



MAP 4. The Gündüzlü-Ceylanlı area and its topography

Some of these tombs present a rather intricate design: a façade surmounted by a pediment and engaged semi-columns. A chamber with *arcosolium* is also the norm in the interior. By far the most interesting is one topped by a weathered relief of five draped individuals, styled to by the locals as the “Five



4.5. Ceylanlı necropolis: the rock-cut tombs

Brothers.” The extreme degree of deterioration hampers a visual identification of these characters, all dressed in heavy garments; a female central figure, however, dominates the field. She seems to be clad in a himation over a chiton. Altogether, the hieratic and austere stance of these individuals replicates a visual idiom en vogue in the region, as attested by the stunning second century CE necropolis at Adamkayalar near modern Silifke in Cilicia. Much closer in terms of proximity and iconography, however, is a second century CE relief from Qatura, in the Jabal al-‘A’la (limestone massif of Syria), which replicates the same figurative scheme, including a similar architectural framework (Figure 4. 6).⁴³

In order to situate the establishment of the Ceylanlı necropolis in its proper cultural horizon we must now turn to one remarkable tomb. It is hewn in the rock high above the trail that leads into the valley and under the previous graves; climbing to reach it is not for the faint of heart. At the entrance is an inscription dedicating and shielding from damage the tomb of Antonia Marcia and other members of her family in the year 157 AD.⁴⁴ Other than making a plea to the gods of the netherworld, the inscription warns visitors that fines in the amount of 1,000 *denaria* awaited violators, and that unknown civic treasurers were responsible for the collection.

...δώσει εἰς τὸν φύσκον δηνάρια μύρια...



4.6. Qatura (Syria): the necropolis

Her message was clear. With much pragmatism Antonia Marcia clung to both infernal gods and the *fiscus* to ensure the protection of the grave. Whether the *fiscus* here is the civic treasury in Antioch or that of a nearby sanctuary, as attested for instance at Ephesos, where the Artemision applied fines against violators of graves, is difficult to infer.⁴⁵ Neither the identity of the family nor their polity of origin can be made out from the text either: broken references to a son Lucius Ioulios and a grandfather Roufos hamper further analysis. Yet, above the chamber hewn in the rock is a badly preserved relief of a standing woman, framed by two engaged columns. The style and tone of the representation are in harmony with the relief of the “Five Brothers.” That this female figure, heavily draped, may portray Antonia Marcia is a strong possibility.

The picture of settlement concludes with the description of Ceylanlı Kale, where an almost completely collapsed and pillaged monumental building is perched on top of a cliff (Figure 4. 7). This small building has never received attention before; it was either a small prostyle temple or a funerary shrine, looking east and similar in plan to that at Burğ Bāqirhā in the Jabal Bariša documented by Tchalenko. In more general terms, it coheres with the design of rural sanctuaries of the first and second centuries CE in northwestern Syria.⁴⁶

As for its layout, the monument is U-shaped and appears to be resting on a low podium cut in the bedrock; the rear wall, built of fine ashlar blocks measures in length 8.10 m and is mounted on a base crowned by a cyma recta molding that is comparable to that of one of the two temples incorporated in the church at Qal’at Kalôta, still in the Jabal Bariša district.⁴⁷ The walls of the *naos* are preserved to a length of 6.70 m and are 1.50 m thick, whereas the height and the interior of the building cannot be established. Some collapsed column drums of 0.80 on diameter, presumably belonging to the *pronaos* lie in the vicinity. The ceramics recovered at the site fit a horizon associated with the first and second centuries CE. Although extremely vague, this is the only the only concrete evidence that may suggest a chronology of the building, aside the similarities with the two previous monuments, both ascribable to the mid-second century CE. Unfortunately, the extensive looting and destruction, as well as the gigantic crater located in the middle of the structure that was seemingly caused by a mechanical excavator, severely impede the understanding of the plan and the formulation of a possible date of the building. Nor are bulldozers and modern-day treasure-hunters to be held solely responsible for the pillaging of the monument. Perhaps during the Byzantine period a retaining/defense wall was built, cannibalizing a great deal of the temple’s



4.7. The shrine at Ceylanlı Kale

architecture for its masonry. To this day, visible fragments of cornice, lintel, and other architectural blocks are incorporated in this makeshift fortification, which showcases a loose rectangular shape and measures some 72 m in length and 31 in width, thus encircling the summit of the hill. The purpose and the exact chronology of these later works are unknown, nor are a *kastron* or shelter attested for this region in the post-classical age. Yet one inscription from near Ceylanlı, recording a dedication to Zeus Ombraros by Valerios Kassios of the Legion III Gallica, first *cohors*, opens suggestive possibilities about the deity to which the shrine was dedicated.⁴⁸ Dated approximately to the second century, the document attests to the presence of a previously unknown cult, and tangentially shows the presence of army officials who were either residing or were in transit along this important route.⁴⁹

We can now combine these several threads to offer a more coherent historical perspective on the settlement dynamics in the district of Gündüzlü-Ceylanlı, and thereby resolve a controversy about the topography of this corner of the Amuq Plain in antiquity (Map 4). In an effort to reconcile the textual accounts on Alexander's campaign in the Amanus and the location of the Persian camp before the battle at Issos – allegedly at Sochoi – George Tchalenko located the latter in this district, thus disregarding Poidebard's identification of Meleagrum as the main center, a town in the territory of Antioch referred in antiquity as the *Χάραξ Μελεάγρου*.⁵⁰ By this rationale,



4.8. Vista from the Limestone Massif: the Amuq Plain from Harim

Tchalenko went on to situate Meleagrum at Muratpaşa, in the Karasu Valley. It should be stressed that upon the AVR P investigation, Muratpaşa produced only an insignificant handful of Early Roman sherds and an abundance of Early and Middle Islamic wares.⁵¹ Moreover, a series of considerations set aside Tchalenko's argument and corroborate Poidebard's original hypothesis. First, the Peutinger Table tallies ten miles between Pagrae and Meleagrum: at 1,500 m per Roman mile it yields a figure that is not too distant to the 18 km that separate the two sites today. What is more, the road continued to Germanicia, Nicopolis and beyond to the north to reach Cappadocia and the military bases on the Euphrates; had it cut through the plain in the direction of Muratpaşa then it would have produced an excessive detour to reach Cyrrhus, let alone Germanicia. And Cyrrhus was already served by the route Antioch-Aleppo-Chalcis, which bifurcates past Imma thus leading to Gindarus and thence Cyrrhus. Lastly, an inscription that actually marks the ὄρος Χαρακειτῶν, i.e. the northern boundary of the territory of the Χάραξ Μελεάγρου helps us firmly locate Meleagrum on this piedmont district.⁵² As it turns out, the boundary stone was found at Esimšek, approximately 5 km inland from Gündüzlü (Figure 4. 8); if the latter is to be identified with Meleagrum, as it seems, the result is that this boundary stone would mark the northwestern limit of the town's land holdings, which would amount to a territory with approximately 4.8 km radius.

At this juncture, it may be suggested that Antioch's territory in the Amanus district did not extend much further north. The cities of Cyrrhus (northeast)

and Germanicia (north) had, of course, their own respective stakes on this landscape; how boundaries were set though remains the question to be determined.

All in all, what are we to make of this settlement diversity in the Amanus? The sample of sites shows a distinctive pattern whereby plateaus straddling the piedmont attracted most occupation, in stark contrast with more sporadic settlement at higher elevations. Peasants deemed this an optimal area for settlement, for its location above the plain and its often marshy conditions, and yet with the ability to access roads with relative ease. As we have seen, a variety of scenarios and opportunities underpinned human initiatives in this complicated, and unstable environment: from the farmer of tree-products to the agents who quarried the rock, this mountain range accommodated a diverse breadth of settlement strategies that this evidence illustrates. These actors combined cultivation, herding, and mining in various ways, however modifying this landscape in fundamental ways. One can argue that these practices, no matter how ephemeral, have a corrosive effect on the mountainous ecosystems of the Mediterranean, accelerating their degradation.⁵³ The limited archaeological sample available, furthermore, bespeaks the short-term or temporary character of most sites, which by the beginning of the Islamic era began to dwindle, and disappeared altogether shortly thereafter, on account of the reconfiguration of the city's economy.⁵⁴ What remains of the physical modifications brought to bear by human agencies are chiefly the extensive terraces that punctuated the piedmont of the Amanus: they retained moisture and foiled waterlogging, with obvious benefits for orchards and micro-fundial cultivation.⁵⁵ But with lack of maintenance and the successive collapse of these field-systems, so accrued the extent of landscape degradation in the plain below. Accumulations of colluvial silt and sediment at the bottom of wadis and valleys no doubt increased in response to these modifications: the evidence presented near Bağras, Kırkhan, and Ceylanlı corroborates this trend.

3 THE JIBĀL OF SYRIA: ANTIOCH AND THE “MASSIF CALCAIRE”

*Taking with him a few attendants with concealed weapons, he used to roam at evening about the inns and street-corners, inquiring of every one in Greek, of which he had remarkable command, what he thought of the Caesar. And this he did boldly in a city where the brightness of the lights at night commonly equals the resplendence of day.*⁵⁶

Ammianus Marcellinus' glimpse of Antioch's nighttime cityscape is remarkable on many counts. As the emperor Gallus undertook incognito nocturnal forays to gauge the public opinion of Antiochenes – in a way similar to the Athenian tyrant Peisistratos⁵⁷ – the curtain that so thickly obscures the city parts in a momentary burst of light and vitality. Aside from being one of the

rare instances of nighttime urban cityscape in the literature of the classical world, this snapshot captures the quality that apparently singled Antioch out: its shimmering light and splendor. One can conjure up the effect of this blaze by climbing the heights of Mt. Silpius on a summer sunset and, as the unison of the call for prayer rises and echoes from the mosques, marvel at the fusion of light and sound that Antakya emanates. It may not have been any different in antiquity.

That the city was lavishly illuminated at night was a well-known fact,⁵⁸ as was the main source for the required oil supply: the myriad oil-farms on the limestone ranges, the so-called Jibāl that frame the Amuq Valley east/south-east, and straddle the frontier between Turkey and Syria. The Jabal al-‘Aqra (Mt. Silpius range) in Turkey and the Jabal al-‘A’la, Zāwiye, Sim‘an, Halaqa, and Barīša in Syria are mountain ranges that, jutting out from the Taurus Mountains, are bisected by the Afrin and Orontes rivers and degrade eastward toward the plains of Aleppo, Chalcis, and Apamea (Map 1, Figure 4.8). The Dana and Šelf plains break the generally humdrum character of these ranges, while serving as pivotal points for the dissemination of trails and routes that cut through the region.

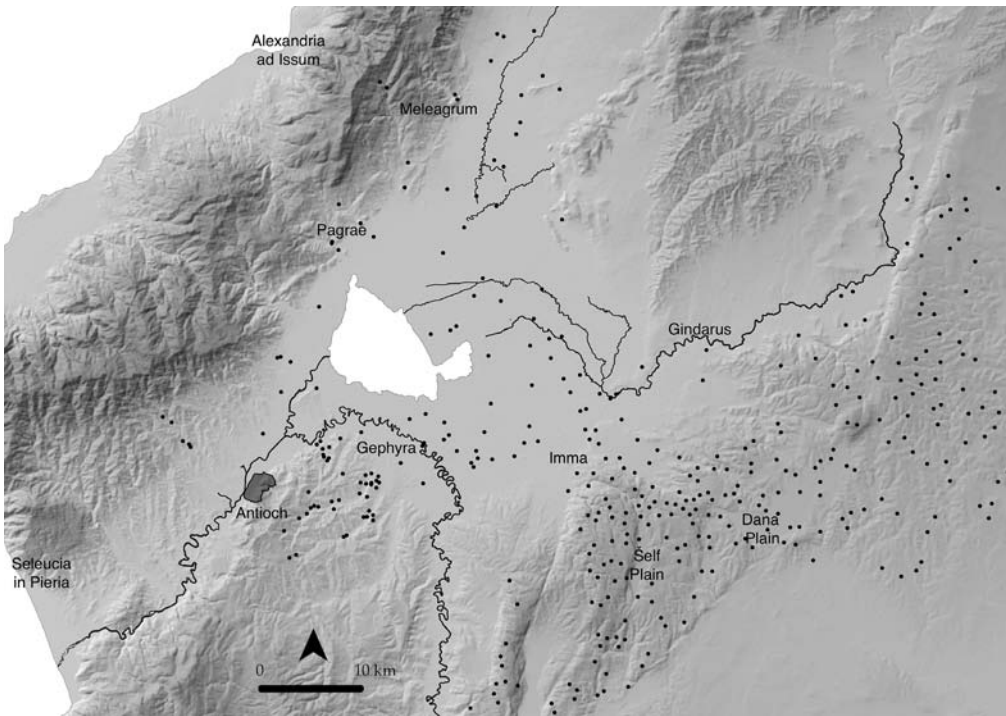
Altogether, these reliefs must be viewed as complementary basins as they share the same geological signature and by and large the same environmental conditions. The geological composition of the Jibāl is essentially one of sandstones and marls of Miocene data, with some patches of Cretaceous limestone, especially on the western foothills near the district of Antioch.⁵⁹ Following a somewhat erratic pattern, these highlands reach fairly significant altitudes, averaging 600 m above sea level with some elevations in the range of 1200 m.⁶⁰ The lack of perennial bodies of water and its karstic matrix, moreover, are critical elements in the Jibāl’s ecosystem. Dolines, blind valleys, and *terra rossa* cultivable pockets that derive from the degradation of these landscapes complete the overall geomorphological picture of the region. Shrubs and maquis represent the ecological signature of a region substantially altered by heavy anthropogenic modifications.

In this region more than anywhere in the Amuq Valley the effects of human-induced erosion and sustained cultivation is evident; the thriving olive and wine industries that for at least six centuries exploited these hills have now exhausted the soil of most of these districts. The anthropic erosion and landscape degradation in this district produced substantial effects and played a fundamental role in the formation of peculiar settlement modules in the Roman and Late Antique periods, as demonstrated by research conducted by Tchalenko and Tate, to be discussed next.⁶¹

Altogether, the sinuous line of these limestone formations represented both a fundamental component of the economy of Antioch, and demarcated the easternmost limits of the city’s territory; but, more importantly, they offered

the locus where Arab nomads, Roman veterans, monks, and entrepreneurs intersected over time, thus forging a culturally unique landscape. The “Dead Cities,” a modern label that often serves to identify this district cannot be more misleading. Aside from the archaeological record, literary sources shed light on the vitality of the region. The wanderings of Theodoret’s *μονάζοντες* on this landscape are particularly meaningful as they provide vivid glimpses of rural life and illustrate the intersecting routes of movement that animated this region.⁶² The hermit Julianus’ journeys from Cyrrhus to Antioch that terminated at the caves in the Parmenios Valley that dominate the city is a good case in point.⁶³ Most notably, though, his travels are characterized by frequent encounters with communities, monasteries, and sacred sites. Of particular note in these travelogues is the braided character of the routes and their ability to elicit socializing, commercial networks, and not least spirituality.⁶⁴ How peasants congregated at the sanctuary of St. Denis, plausibly a *Martyrion* along the route from Antioch to Cyrrhus, as Julianus neared the site is a good example.⁶⁵ Impostors, false dogmas, heresies: the hermit had to reckon with the anxieties of a community in disquiet and altogether attracted by the visit of a well-known virtuous man. His words of encouragement that bred no tolerance for the enemies of Christ sure had an impact on the onlookers, and so did the subsequent prodigy, that is the sudden death of the main villain, one Asterios. Aptly, Theodoret remarks that the prayer of the Saint rescued the community. Be that as it may, other *mausolea* and memorials commemorating saints and local notables must have functioned similarly as landmarks and gathering points, placed as they were on prominent plateaus: conspicuous tombs that punctuate the horizon at Brad, Kafr Nabo, and Bourdj Heidar vividly illustrate this phenomenon.⁶⁶ Altogether, trails accorded a sense of rationality to the vastness of a landscape that in actuality offered few points of reference to those who traversed it:⁶⁷ one such route, connecting Imma to Ġuwānīye, bisected the Jabal Barīša North to South serving communities both on the Massif and on the Šelf Plain.

Today, the boundary between the Republic of Turkey and Syria creates a critical divide between the two halves of the same ecosystem, all the more aggravated by the current civil war in Syria. The Trajanic temple at Burğ Bāqirhā overlooking Yenīşehir and the Amuq Plain from southeast seems to have lost its *raison d’être*, divorced as it were from its builders, plausibly the community at Imma, by barbwire and even minefields. Furthermore, the mobility and economic vibrancy that were the hallmarks of this landscape seem nowhere to be found amid petrified expanses of land and desolate silhouettes of late antique churches and farms. Yet here, more than in any other sector of Antioch’s territory we have the ability to experience the effects of the long arm of the city. The continuum of settlement spurred by



MAP 5. Late Roman settlement in the territory of Antioch as documented by the AVRPP and Tchalenko surveys

Antioch's growth reached its pinnacle on these unpromising plateaus during the course of the fourth century. Central in this analysis is the illustration (Map 5) that sews together the Late Roman archaeological records of recent surveys in the Amuq Valley and that of early surveys on the limestone massif. Reconciling survey data from disparate sources can be a daunting task – all the more so when interpreting the data acquired in the early days of reconnaissance. The last two decades, in particular, witnessed vibrant debates with a view toward establishing a theoretical and methodological orthodoxy of archaeological survey.⁶⁸ In this vein, conflating the standing architecture-based settlements identified by Butler and Tchalenko with sherd accumulations as mapped by the AVRPP may appear a hazard on several counts. Yet difficulties can be overcome; as it stands, Map 5 captures the dispersion of sites when settlement reached its peak around the fourth century CE, and illustrates the organic spreading of communities on the uplands as a result of the ecological and economic modifications of the plain of Antioch that were described in Chapter 3. For too long settlements in the two basins have been considered only loosely related, almost as two distinct emanations of Antioch's enlargement, and that can be explained on two counts. First, the presence of a modern border, which in times of political volatility represents a

formidable hindrance to piecing together any integral regional study. Second, the nature of the various archaeological expeditions conducted in these districts during the 1930s has hardly ever been called into question. For one, the survey of Tchalenko is a good case in point. Undoubtedly, it represents a masterly excursus about rural enclaves, their built environment and their religious tensions, yet confined, as it were, to a region that appears divorced from the urban entities that realized it.

4 LE MASSIF DU BÉLUS

Thanks to the rich epigraphic record of the region, now the eastern and southeastern extents of Antioch's territory can be safely established. Unlike its Syrian urban counterparts who adjusted their calendar to the Seleucid tradition, Antioch for centuries remained loyal to the Caesarian era, an everlasting sign of gratitude for the grant of *libertas*, tax exemptions and building programs – among which was an amphitheater – sponsored by the Roman general.⁶⁹ In keeping with this tradition, rural communities in the territory of Antioch recorded notable events according to the Caesarian calendar, which, reckoned from the fall of year 49 BCE. Hence, Henri Seyrig, one of the most authoritative scholars of ancient Syria, mapped inscriptions that used the Caesarian era and thus was able to determine the limits of the city's territory amid the wadis and deeply cut gullies of the Jibāl.⁷⁰ The picture that comes across is one of yet another vast and topographically diverse district connected to the already extensive holdings of Antioch: the Jibāl Halaqa and Barīša for example. Also, sizable portions of the Jibāl Sem'an and Zāwiye were presumably under the sovereignty of Antioch and formed the boundaries with the territories of Cyrrhus and Apamea, respectively.⁷¹ No significant geological features separated the orbit of one city from the other, nor do the few boundary markers recovered serve to better articulate the partition of this vast space;⁷² small plateaus, dead-ending valleys, ravines, and the occasional orchard defied the navigation of the region then as today. Even traces of ancient cadasters baffle the viewer:⁷³ eighth–ninth century CE drystone walls running for several km with no apparent relation to the terrain and previous settlement patterns may attest to forms of property parceling, as well as to the relentless laboring of this landscape. Rather, the properties in all likelihood defined boundaries and determined watersheds between civic territories. Routines tied to agriculture and animal husbandry as well as the presence of landmarks like sacred sites accorded navigability and frameworks of reference that the modern viewer fails to grasp.

But, when did modification of this territory begin? What role did Antioch play in spearheading the arrival of farmers and entrepreneurs on these remote massifs?

While traces of occupation hark back to the Neolithic period,⁷⁴ and sites like Dêhès have shown traces of Hellenistic occupation,⁷⁵ it is plain that systematic



4.9. Burğ Bāqirhā: the Trajanic temple

settlement on these sweeps coincided as early as the late first century CE, when waves of settlers occupied hitherto untapped pockets of land, and established settlements that were to reach remarkable heights between the fourth and sixth centuries CE.⁷⁶ Greek entrepreneurs, farmers, and veterans seeking profitable investments and alternatives to the plain of Antioch undertook the agricultural exploitation of the region, and stamped their identities on these landscapes by consecrating sanctuaries and setting up *mausolea*. A late first century–early second century CE walled villa with annexed oil farm and hypogeum at Bamuqqa in the Jabal Bariša⁷⁷ may be assigned to the first wave of arrivals. Showcasing a fine dressed stone architecture, and a bent for articulating space for production, this complex illustrates the economic power of these communities. By the sixth century, sixteen properties of comparable size lay in a 150 m radius at Bamuqqa. All in all, this site alone may be treated as a powerful sample of the settlement dynamics that invested this region during classical and late antiquity.

These waves of early settlers were not slow in building a constellation of pagan sanctuaries on the Jibāl Bariša and al-A'la in the Šelf plain, which are typically assigned to late first–early second century CE.⁷⁸

In particular, the already mentioned sanctuary at Burğ Bāqirhā where a cult to Zeus Bomos was erected during the early second century CE figures prominently (Figure 4.9).⁷⁹ Four of the temple's columns were still standing at the time of Tchalenko's visit and one carried the noted inscription commemorating the restoration of the temple by Aurelios Kirillos, son of Diodoros in 238 CE. Stylistically, the plan of the building and the rendering of the

capitals, especially the *kalathos* and the *abacus*, resemble those of a sanctuary to the south of Burġ Bāqirhā at Sīr, dedicated under Trajan.⁸⁰ Another comparable structure can be seen to the east at Šeikh Barakāt (ancient Koryphe), and was dedicated to Zeus Madbachos.⁸¹ Circumscribed by a temenos, the small temple was initially built in 61 AD, yet a number of overhauls and repairs consolidated and finalized its design by the Trajanic epoch, over a several decade span.⁸² Various other sites, chiefly cemeteries,⁸³ that were often characterized by monumental shrines complement the picture of settlement south of Imma; especially noteworthy are several sarcophagi bearing Greek inscriptions that refer to wealthy second century CE landowners with Roman as well as other Semitic, Aramean, and Greek names.⁸⁴

All in all, the surveys and explorations conducted by Tchalenko, Tate, and Sodini, among others, have been instrumental in documenting the religious realities of these landscapes in antiquity, and not least the dissemination of these rural foci. It should be borne in mind that the literature stemming from this research is absolutely vast, and there's no need to reiterate its key tenets. Yet the most vital and intriguing facet of this settlement lies in the economic underpinnings that led the region to its apparent state of prosperity. For good or ill, oil and wine production was key to the welfare of these communities.⁸⁵ The anecdote of an Antiochene priest begging the hermit Zebinas to extend his hand on an oil flask, and thus terminate what Theodoret calls a most aggravating drought, though laden with the clichés of the genre, illustrates the incontrovertible fact that oleoculture was fundamental in the economy of this region.⁸⁶ Along these lines, Tchalenko produced a picture of an independent peasantry that was solely occupied with the production of olive oil aimed at short and long-range distribution. He even minted a toponym for the region, that of the "Massif du Bélus," stemming from two of the few historically known sites of this mountain range, Seleucia and Chalcis *ad Belum*.

In his view monoculture loomed large over the Jibāl, while Antioch was the main market for the consumption and sale of its oil.⁸⁷ Successive studies have substantially finessed this narrative: it is now apparent that olive oil was integrated in local and supra-regional "customized" markets⁸⁸ and was indeed the region's staple crop at least in the early imperial period, yet in conjunction with an array of other rural practices, from animal husbandry to viticulture.⁸⁹ The latter, however, has been brought into sharper focus by recent interpretative frameworks. In particular, the evidence of presses serving exclusively the oil industry has been called into question by Callot; grounding his argument in purely mechanical and practical observations (the presence of rock-cut pressing basins and the capacity of the cisterns), he now posits that the majority of the establishments in the archaeological record that operated between the fourth and sixth centuries were in actuality designed to serve the production and export of wine.⁹⁰ By this scheme, only a minority of oil-farms were built during this

span of time, and what is more, early second/third centuries establishments may have ceased their operations. The village of Dêhès, with at least three installations falling out of use by the fifth century is a good case in point.⁹¹ All in all, the pattern of growth previously attributed to the oil industry is now transferred to wine production; the finessing of the mechanical apparatus, geared as it was for an increased production, transformed the design of the wine presses in the fourth–sixth centuries CE. The subverting of the traditional view along these lines has of course broad socio-economic implications that remain to be addressed; it also begs fundamental questions about the nature of the communities that occupied the limestone massif and their role in transitioning to new economic paradigms. More than a century of scholarship has not exhausted the discussion of this startling micro-universe; more is indeed to come.

Even the built environments of this landscape – its evolution and subsequent deterioration – have been object of much scholarly scrutiny. Tate's taxonomy of households on the Jibāl, in particular, has added a lens for assessing the variability and evolution of farms in relation to the systems of production and the realization of returns that could be spent in the decoration of the built environment.⁹² It is now apparent that Tate's analysis falls short at gleaning information on the regions' demographic based on the sole configuration of households. Nor is his long-term narrative of settlement in the region taking into account the durability of settlement and the apparent disconnect between these districts and the downturns that affected Syria during the third and sixth centuries, to cite but two eras.⁹³ In general, agrarian practices in the region depended on a framework of farmers and entrepreneurs who, with time, were supplanted by absentee landlords that held the helm of these activities from their distant abodes in Antioch and on the plain. The overall conservative character of the systems of production and the limited nature of the resources available entailed only minimal changes within the mechanisms of this microcosm.

As for the archaeological record, this region tallies hundreds of oil/wine farms, and though many of these are well preserved, an accurate estimate in terms of numbers and distribution remains to be determined. Tate's sample of 45 villages in the Jibāl Sem'an, Barīša, al-'A'la, and Halaka produced a count of 245 presses.⁹⁴ A chronology of these installations, however, is not any easier to discern, as pointed out by Callot in his study of the Syrian oil-farms.⁹⁵ Scholarly consensus is nevertheless that in the fifth and sixth centuries CE these plateaus reached maximum capacity in terms of land exploitation and perhaps population. The latter phenomenon, in particular, might be tied into the transformations that the Antiochene economy was undergoing at those times, induced by the re-structuring of many estates and villages in the plain, and their coping with the expansion of the lake's wetlands.⁹⁶ Although obviously an exaggeration, Tchalenko's contention that 2,000 temporary workers at times would have populated villages like that of Beyho in the Jabal

al-‘A’la for the olive harvest season,⁹⁷ has more than a grain of truth. All estates had finite limits and the very nature of the terrain posed limits on the expansion of the oil and wine industries and thus to the numbers of actors involved. Because of this state of affairs, temporary workers must have been a critical component in the economic landscape of the region. A 223 AD well-known inscription from an oil farm owned by a temple at Kafr Nabo shows that the personnel involved in the management and functioning of an oilery could include individuals from all walks of life, from the military veteran to the carpenter.⁹⁸ In particular, Claudius, a veteran at the rank of *evocatus*, was the *epimeletes* of the oilery, that is an administrator, along with three commissioners (Nomerios, Berion, and Dareios). The contractors Antonios, Sopatros, Gaios, Seleucos, and Domeitianos may have built the farm and participated in the seasonal pressing operations while also performing in other professional capacities during the rest of the year. While all of this is conjectural at best, it is apparent that the olive farms in this region were not only production centers capable to produce an important commodity and surplus, but also establishments that generated social interaction and unique managerial schemes such as that of Kafr Nabo. And, the dissemination of Roman veterans and their families on these highlands, as illustrated by the epigraphical evidence,⁹⁹ raises important questions about the increasingly diverse society in the region, and the Roman constituencies’ role in spearheading these economic practices. The Kafr Nabo oil farm, managed by both Romans and local notables, is a good example of an entrepreneurial activity that perforce collated various segments of the Jibāl’s population.

To what degree the peasantry that lived on these expanses was integrated in the Antiochene universe is a question that has been debated by modern scholarship. We need not be deceived by the picture of an apparently autarchic and independent peasantry. Opportunism led to the episodic settlements of farmers, entrepreneurs, and newcomers from the swathes of the Amuq Plain to the Jibāl during the first two centuries CE; some of these ventures may have succumbed within a few generations, others may have been instrumental in attracting new settlement. With time, tenancy and dependency may have changed considerably; the picture we draw from Libanius and John Chrysostom is one of almost vanished independent peasantry, where conversely landlords and their officials more often than not acted as tyrants.¹⁰⁰ How this system had gradually eroded the constellations of independent farmers that populated the Amuq Valley and the Jibāl for centuries remains to be determined. Undoubtedly the mutability of the Amuq Plain can be held accountable for the transformation of the overall ecological framework, a phenomenon which may have led to the absorption of farms and villages into large estates. It is now apparent that most of the villages and farms that populated the limestone massif between the fourth and sixth centuries were

tied to absentee landlords who in all likelihood resided in the city or in the large landed properties, perhaps the units labeled as *epoikia* that appeared in the Amuq Plain. One good example of this kind of estate can be found, once again, near the village of Kafr Nabo. How this picture of settlement can be corroborated by the Jibāl adjacent to Antioch is the subject of what follows.

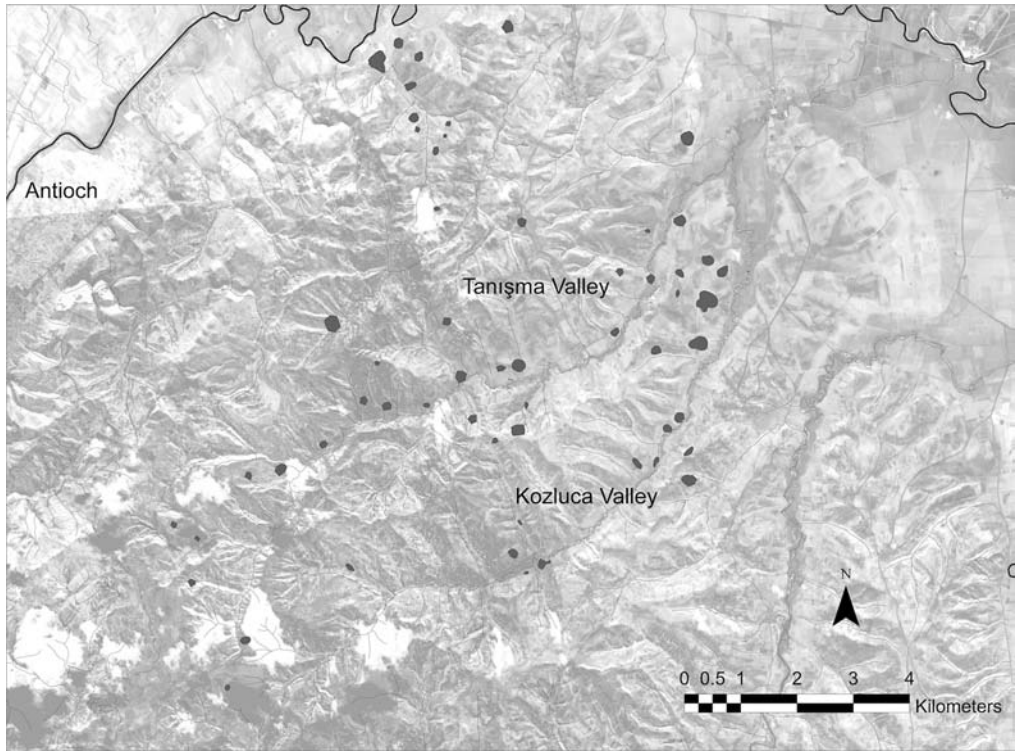
5 JABAL AL-‘AKRA

AVRP integrated some of this important information in novel interpretative frameworks with its particular focus on the Turkish side of Antioch's territory and investigation of the territory of the Jabal al-‘Akra. Here on these dry highlands situated southeast of Antioch, the archaeological survey unexpectedly recorded the highest site density. It needs to be stressed that the geological and environmental conditions in this region are very much compatible with those of the Syrian Jibāl to the east.

These limestone highlands hardly invited settlement. Limiting factors include an average rainfall of 300–600 mm per year, a lack of perennial streams, intense erosion, not to mention the generally rugged nature of the terrain. A volatile and sporadic Hellenistic settlement was decisively superseded in the first and second centuries CE by the emergence of nucleations on patches of cultivable land on the plateaus, valley floors, and especially on the rolling hills where soil is typically thicker. In all, 53 sites were identified by the AVRP. Difficult terrain and the limited availability of arable land governed settlement distribution that ranges from a dense packing of sites less than 500 m from each other to a dispersal over several kilometers. Today, these sites appear as completely nondescript in nature, and accumulation of ceramics as well as traces of building debris (tiles and fragments of masonry) are the only cultural indicators. By and large, these farms are of rather small size, generally measuring less than one hectare.

Thus, the Jabal al-‘Akra intensive survey yielded the highest density of sites recorded, 3.50 per sq km, as opposed to 0.40 in the plain (Figure 4.10). The sampled areas by and large display a trend toward denser settlement on the foothills and at lower elevations. It is tempting to explain the later shift in settlement from the plain to higher elevations as a rational response to the fact that, by the end of the first century CE, the plain had probably reached its maximum capacity and the overall environmental conditions did not favor new settlement. It is helpful to remember that the gradual growth of the lake and its marshes during Late Antiquity also complicated settlement at lower elevations, putting the local communities under much strain.¹⁰¹

Modern mechanical farming has unfortunately caused the destruction and dispersal of these settlements, to the degree that no site can be safely reconstructed. Yet, archaeological exploration of the Jabal al-‘Akra



4.10. Jabal al-‘Akra: the density of settlement during the Early Roman period

and of the easternmost districts of the Amuq Valley (Yenişehir and Reyhanlı) brings four factors into focus:

- First, settlement in the area began in the late first century CE. Previously these territories witnessed very volatile and short-lived occupation. The material evidence indicates survival and consolidation of these communities during the course of the fourth century CE, while by the mid-fifth to mid-sixth century the settlement reached its peak. Virtually every site of thirty-eight identified was inhabited during the Late Roman period throughout the valleys and plateaus of the Jabal. Of these, many had good assemblages with late antique fine wares (71%). The evidence suggests that these sites were perhaps more than isolated farms, but included churches (possibly AS 275), villas, or large farmsteads, despite the fact that there were no main roads, canals, river networks or other strategic and economic considerations to warrant a multi-building complex. The six largest sites with the heaviest assemblages were all previously inhabited in the Roman period and located in valleys or near the valley floor. Taken together, this pattern illustrates the evolution of the dense concentration of sites in the plain during the early imperial period and the consolidation of many of these villages and productive units around the fourth century. The dissemination of small farms that exploited the agricultural potential of these reliefs, in particular,

seems germane to the settlement systems observed across the Syrian Jibal. However, unlike the latter, where continuity of settlement is attested for the whole seventh century and no signs of dwindling can be detected before the Abassid era,¹⁰² it appears that the majority of the Jabal al-‘Akra sites did not go beyond the mid-sixth century, at a time when the city of Antioch underwent blows that greatly undermined its fabric and economy. To wit: fires, Persian sacks, earthquakes, plagues, droughts, and even weevil invasions took a huge toll on the city and country between AD 524 and 599.¹⁰³ Moreover, Antiochenes were deported by Khusrō (AD 540) and their olive orchards hacked to the ground.¹⁰⁴ After Justinian reconfigured the city curtailing its fortifications,¹⁰⁵ the rural districts would no doubt have been weakened.

- Second, the cumulative evidence in the region is fairly unambiguous. Fragments of stone crushers, anchoring stones for beam presses, basins, vats, and tanks exist in particular density. They are documented at practically each site investigated, but in no way do they enable a safe reconstruction of the presses and their apparatus.¹⁰⁶ Nor determinations can be made about the distinction between olive and wine presses in the area. It follows that any calculation of output rates, in particular, is simply not applicable to these contexts.
- Third, the dissemination of fragments of amphora is noteworthy as it attests presumably to the presence of a local production (especially LR 1 specimens) but also of Cretan, Ionian, and Black Sea productions (notably Dressel 2/4, Zemer 57, Zeest 86 and Knossos 26/7). This archaeological record is of interest as it opens important vistas onto Antioch’s integration into the larger commercial networks of Asia Minor and the Greek East. While Cretan and Ionian imports may have belonged chiefly to the commerce of wine, more perplexing is the incidence of amphorae of plausible Black Sea provenience. The appearance of a prominent wine industry on the sweeps of the Massif Calcaire from the fourth century onward opens suggestive possibilities as to the economic scenarios that unfolded in the Jebel al-‘Akra, as we shall see next. At stake for now is the question whether Antioch’s oil and wine traveled to far-flung locations or were produced only for local consumption. We may note here, however, a letter by Libanius which illustrates tightly knit commercial relations between Antioch and the Black Sea coast.¹⁰⁷ The nonchalance with which the author refers to his unknown business in Sinope suggests that mercantile exchanges were routine in the economic agendas of wealthy Antiochene aristocrats of the fourth century CE. Whether this has any bearing on the distribution of Antioch’s wine or olive oil in the Black Sea region remains to be determined.
- Fourth: the recent archaeological survey around Antioch has proved decisive not least in showing that most houses and farms in the northeastern countryside within a 40 km radius were decorated by mosaics and may have been equipped with the amenities that traditionally are assigned to aristocratic villae.¹⁰⁸ While their ceramic assemblages are somewhat uniform, with a predominance of first

and second century CE Eastern Sigillatas and a minority of African imports and Late Roman wares, the presence of mosaics in 55.8 % of the total contexts of the Jabal prompts further consideration. Mosaics were apparently not only a prerogative of the luxurious suburban villae in Daphne;¹⁰⁹ they also decorated the small farms scattered about the rural districts of the Jabal, as the evidence of dolomite, glass, and limestone tesserae suggests. These foci date between the second and fifth century CE and resulted from the expansion of the city in the Amuq Valley. Rather than an aesthetic solution affordable only by well-to-do Antiochenes, mosaics were an essential component in shaping the domestic environment of any size. Altogether, these pavements reflected the aesthetic outlook of a vast constituency and may have been central in the planning and building processes of the domestic locales. Conversely, the frequency with which these finds were made in the region is at odds with the archaeological evidence from the Amuq Plain where mosaics appear sporadically. It is important to underscore an important difference between this region and the Syrian Jibāl, where mosaics seldom appear in domestic contexts and seem to be relegated to churches.

These systems of sites radiating from the city of Antioch can be seen on Map 5; the data suggest the beginning of settlement activity occurring in the late first, early second centuries CE with consolidation and enlargement in the fourth and fifth centuries CE. That this settlement began to dwindle in the sixth century has been shown earlier. The modality with which Antioch's rural occupation expanded and contracted in the Later Empire depended, as we have seen, on a combination of ecological factors and economic opportunities;¹¹⁰ yet it needs to be stressed that these trends cohere with the overall picture of expanding settlement offered by Duncan Jones for most of northern Syria.¹¹¹ Moreover, site density on the slopes and plateaus of the Jabal al-‘Akra, with a concentration of farms often in less than 500 m radius, needs to be stressed. This pattern is equally visible in the Syrian Jibāl, although it could be inferred that the highest density of settlement in the latter might date to the fourth century CE onward.

At this juncture, a narrative on the nature of the earliest settlement on the Jabal al-‘Akra can be proposed. A system of oil farms of the early imperial period, located on the Syrian Jibāl and in the eastern Amuq Valley would have granted a steady supply of oil to the city of Antioch. For the Early Roman empire it can be surmised that on the basis of the archaeological record and of figures from contemporary contexts in Baetica and Lybia¹¹² that there were at least 180 presses over the 400 sq km of the Jabal al-‘Akra. Turkish research conducted on the southern reaches of the Jabal, in the region known as Kuseyr Yaylası confirms the pattern of dissemination of small oil farms in the region, some of which present a rather consistent size in their lever and screw pressing

apparatus, with basins averaging 1/1.25 m in diameter, thus consonant with the equipment noted by Callot for instance at Qirbize on the Jabal al-‘A’la.¹¹³ One could, therefore, speculate that the yearly output of olive oil at the average rate of 2,000–5,000 liters per press would yield a minimum of 300,000 liters from the Jabal alone, a quantity that alone would have covered a good portion of the consumption needs of a city the size of Antioch, whose population tallied between 250,000 and 500,000 inhabitants.¹¹⁴ Callot’s recent arguments on olive oil production invite much prudence, but if we were to add the 245 presses counted by Tate in 45 villages of the Syrian Jibāl, the numbers of olives and presses are likely to swell. Caesar’s fine of 3 million pounds of olive oil on Lepcis Magna makes clear the extraordinary output of olive oil of which these cities were capable. With the growth of rural settlement in the eastern Antiochene during the fourth and fifth centuries CE it is likely that oil production was even greater; nevertheless, no precise estimate can be produced at this time.¹¹⁵

Business partnerships, entrepreneurs, and new communities effectively took advantage of the opportunities offered by these complicated landscapes. We should be mindful of the fact that the olive as a cash crop was grown for its *value*, and thus its expansion into Antioch’s highlands must be understood as a rational response to market demand. With the archaeological data failing to provide definite evidence, we shall turn again to the textual record. And it should also be noted that for taxation purposes in the fourth century CE a single *iugerum* of olive trees was comparable to 5 *iugera* of vineyard and 20 *iugera* of arable land.¹¹⁶ The ten-year maturation cycle for its trees, and the fruiting pattern of the crop that alternates one large harvest with a small to medium one, entailed long-term strategies and capital investments, though profits were almost certainly guaranteed.

Antioch oil farms had no shortage of clientele. While fairs, markets, and seasonal outlets like that held in Imma and in the other rural districts provided ample opportunities for the sale of oil, this industry could also rely on two important buyers: the city and the army. One should consider, for example, how large-scale acquisitions of oil to supply the Roman troops could also have stimulated the local economies. It was not, however, until the fourth and fifth centuries that the total production of olive oil presumably exceeded the limits of Antiochene markets. The abundant traces of LR1 amphora fragments of likely local and also of Pontic origin recorded by AVRPP may inform the exchanges and trade routes that underpinned this industry, as well as that of wine. The rise of Constantinople and the emergence of a new economy in the middle of the fourth century replicated the spirit and many of the practices that had sustained Imperial Rome for centuries. As a result, the new capital on the Bosphorus might have stimulated olive oil production through incentives similar to those spelled out by the Abydos Tariff, spurred new markets as well

as outlets for the shipments of commodities.¹¹⁷ Whether for doles or per capita oil consumption, it is likely that the olive resources in Phrygia and Bithynia, to name but two districts, could not satisfy the demand of a city like Constantinople that by the fifth century had already doubled in population. Cilicia, albeit on a minor scale, offers evidence of vast expanses of land that were transformed into olive orchards and that performed at full swing around the fourth century.¹¹⁸

At this point it is useful to return to Libanius' Antiochikos, his well-known oration in *Praise of Antioch*. Through the exaggeration that accompanies any panegyric, he mentions in passing far-flung distribution of Antiochene oil through carriers and cargoes. And while it is difficult to infer the specific channels through which this commerce was accomplished, his reference to riverine transportation of goods is certainly of interest.¹¹⁹ What cannot, however, be dismissed is that at that time, the trade in Antiochene olive oil was in all likelihood integrated into the new markets that the city of Constantinople had stimulated. While much of this commodity was still consumed in the region, it can be inferred that a sizeable quantity was shipped to destinations throughout the Mediterranean.

Though dominant, the olive industry was not the only crop on the Jibāl; cereals were cultivated on small parcels of land through use of terraces, still visible today, and on the floor of the narrow valleys that cut through the Jabal al-‘Akra. Wine production was also a key part of this landscape and textual sources mention/stress the high quality of the wine produced in Antioch.¹²⁰ Local wine production, other than being economically relevant, also had important social undertones, as the visual culture expressed by the late second century CE pavements recovered by the Antioch's excavations demonstrates. The various themes emphasizing the consumption of wine and the repeated iconography of the symposium (e.g. the pavements from the *House of the Drunken Dionysus*) corroborate the cultural function of wine in Antioch and environs.¹²¹ Yet how wine production interfaced with the oil industry in the fourth century, and whether the modifications that we have seen at work in the Syrian Jibāl occurred in this district is a question that cannot be answered.

While the modeling of this landscape is based on robust premises, the conditions that supported settlement on the limestone hills of the Jabal al-‘Akra remain difficult to discern for two reasons. First, we do not know the characteristics of the estates, let alone the tenancy systems that shaped this landscape. Were the farmers in this district independent? Were they bound to a landlord? If so, what were the terms of their relation? A wide spectrum of relations existed between landlords and farmers, and the thin evidence available hampers further hypotheses. Second, while we can make assumptions about the impact that olive and wine production had on the urban market, the mechanisms of this industry, its transactions, routes and regulations remain

hypothetical. And, to trace the agencies that shaped these districts, however, we may turn our attention once again to the Syrian Jibāl. Here the surveys of Tchalenko have produced a small but significant corpus of names of land-owners and families who apparently lived and conducted their activities in this region starting in the late first century CE. Inscriptions citing the Aelii, Aemilii, Claudii, Iulia, Settia, and Valerii families,¹²² to name but a few, reflect the penetration as well as the dispersion of Roman citizens in eastern Antiochene. This evidence argues for the presence of veteran soldiers who colonized these hills and seized its resources, while the erection of several *mausolea* indicates the rise to prominence of these same families. It is useful to note that this province boasted the highest number of legionaries, and provincial administrators had to cope with the high cost of discharge benefits. If the Amuq Plain in the late first century CE no longer represented an attractive solution to settling because of factors mentioned previously, the Jabal certainly offered ample economic possibilities in return for a substantial initial investment. It is then likely that the discharge premium was the initial capital investment for many of the olive oil/wine farms that were established on the Jibāl during the first two centuries CE.

Veteran settlers were the first to seize the most fertile areas, especially those that were suitable for a mixed regime of oleoculture and other crops. The small Dana Plain to the south of Imma illustrates this trend. This 5×10 sq km narrow basin is situated within a system of wadis and was one of the few plains that could be extensively cultivated. Its archaeological record includes a rich body of inscriptions referring to, among others, the Roman veterans T. Flavius Julianus and Aemilius Reginus,¹²³ and suggests that these families were among the first to settle in this fertile enclave. It can be inferred that a similar model existed also in the Jabal al-‘Akra, especially in the Tanışma Valley, where the overall better soil conditions likely drew early settlers. Sites of conspicuous size, characterized by mosaics and frescoes, attest to a settlement pattern that might be in accord with this hypothesis.

The exact circumstances that drew veterans to this region are debatable. It is possible, however, that upon discharge, individuals who were not of Syrian origin considered settlement in this sector of Antiochene a viable investment. Another possibility not to be discounted is that the provincial government offered incentives and exemptions to these soldiers in order to encourage settlement. After all, it was desirable to convert these potentially volatile units into farmers under the same rationale that Augustus employed for his colonization programs in the East. The presence of veterans also contributed to the monitoring of this landscape and its resources for fiscal purposes.

Several discharge cycles over the first and mid-second centuries CE, with peaks at the time of Augustus and Hadrian, may thus account for the sudden urbanization of the Jibāl. It is important to remember that besides its suitability

for olive and vine cultivation, this region offered no other particular incentives for occupation. Thus veteran settlement could take advantage of the only economic opportunity that the region had to offer.

The outsize role of discharged legionaires in colonizing the region is but one facet of the social configuration of this territory. Concurrent with the rise of veteran-owned farms in this region, local aristocrats like Alexandros, son of Antiochos, and Eisodotas, son of Ptolomaeos,¹²⁴ erected their own *mausolea* and equally exploited the region's potential for oil and wine production. How these local aristocrats competed for resources with Roman citizens and whether the land that they exploited was equally allotted are difficult to determine. Inscriptions from the Syrian Jibāl, however, provide some insights here.

Small villages like that of Qatura in the Jabal al-‘A’la were inhabited by at least three veteran families in the late first century CE, and they presumably enjoyed equal land benefits while coexisting with local landowners. Other villages seem to follow this pattern as well.¹²⁵ This type of settlement is comparable with that of other Roman landscapes, particularly with that found in the interior of Mauretania Caesariensis. There the archaeological evidence suggests that there was no distinction between veteran farms and *fundi* belonging to the aristocracy of the local Mazices, and that the landholders by and large enjoyed equal territories.¹²⁶ Roman veterans also settled in other Syrian towns and villages and always figure prominently in inscriptions. The case of Bosra is especially illuminating: veterans and their families enjoyed particular benefits and were referred to as *ouetranikoi*, thus drawing the same consideration as the city councilors in whose territories they had their properties. This is of importance, as Bosra became a legionary base as early as the Julio-Claudian period and was raised to the status of military bulwark of the province Arabia from the Trajanic period onward when *Legio III Cyrenaica* was stationed there.¹²⁷ In addition, the city witnessed the growth of a dense rural settlement system of veterans until the third century CE.¹²⁸ It may be inferred that these same mechanisms were at work in Antioch and more specifically in the Jabal al-‘Akra district, where the AVRPs suggest similar dynamics of wealth production.

The prosperity produced by this economy had a twofold result. On one hand, it increased the purchasing power of these communities as well as their capital investments; in a territory that offered limited possibilities for land exploitation, this was presumably directed more toward the acquisition of smaller estates. On the other hand, this system underlay the social mobility that led several of these families to provincial prominence. To put it simply: it is perhaps in the economy of this rugged landscape that we can situate the emergence of the landed aristocracy that figures so prominently in Daphne's suburban *villae*.¹²⁹ In focusing solely on their pavements, the Antioch excavations failed to fully document the context and rationale behind those splendid

residences. They succeeded, however, in illustrating the presence of a class of aristocrats and local elites who styled themselves as Romans and lived in environments filled with symbols of strictly Roman material culture,¹³⁰ from *triclinia* to frescoes, albeit filtered through a local sensibility. While their names are unknown, it can be safely inferred that their wealth was a product of the economic systems at work in the hinterlands of Antioch and particularly in the most remunerative commodities, oil and wine.

Beginning in the late first century CE, some of the most prominent Antiochene families began to reach the Roman senate. Through a formulaic system entailing magistracies and liturgies within the city and successively within the *koinon*, local aristocrats entered the equestrian order and then, within a generation, the senatorial ranks. This trend of upward mobility coheres with that of other eastern provinces such as Asia and Pontus where, in the early first century CE, a slew of Greek-speaking senators began a trend that was to increase in the following decades. Antioch apparently produced its first senators in the last decades of the first century CE. Tiberius Claudius Pompeianus was the first of a cohort of Antiochene senators that in several instances reached the consulate as well.¹³¹ These threads can now be pulled together: the economic boom on Antioch's highlands, the emergence of a landed aristocracy and the appearance of Antiochene senators. These elements coalesce to give a picture of general prosperity that the city especially enjoyed in the late first-early second centuries CE, and the role of the settlement of veteran soldiers in this process has to be kept in mind.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE WESTERN ANTIOCHENE

From the Orontes Delta to Daphne

Between 27 and 11 BCE the city of Mytilene voted to bestow divine honors on Augustus and his lineage; the enactment was hewn on a large stele.¹ The document is of extraordinary importance as it attests to the genesis of the imperial cult in the Greek East, and the forging of the pan-Mediterranean loyalty to the Romans that was to hold the empire together for centuries to come. Among the various provisions inscribed in the stone, however, Mytilene mandated that heralds be sent to main city-ports in the empire to announce games in honor of the *Sebastos*. These were Actium, Brundisium, Tarraco, Massalia, and Antioch near Daphne. The inclusion of the latter can hardly be glossed over. Little did it matter to the Mytileneans that Antioch was nowhere near the sea, and that the actual port was the twin-sister Seleucia in Pieria. To them, Antioch apparently straddled land and sea, from the heights of Daphne to the Mediterranean coast. And, it may be surmised that the language of the Mytileneans reflected a broader, common identification. How this misconception about Seleucia was grounded into Antioch's shaping of its southwestern territory, and southwest Syria at large, are the topics this chapter sets out to explore.

While for the regions north and east of Antioch I could draw on conspicuous archaeological data, the scanty evidence in the western Antiochene hampers a diachronic interpretative framework, let alone the discussion of evolving settlement patterns from the days of the Seleucid foundation. Aside from episodic archaeological investigations at Seleucia Pieria, Mt. Mirabilis (the

Wondrous Mountain, Samandağı), and Daphne, the settlement history of the lower Orontes Valley' is virtually unknown; a meager corpus of inscriptions and ancient texts do however substantiate the picture of Antioch's expansion along the southwestern corridor.

Archaeological research in the western Antiochene has been limited to systematic architectural surveys conducted by French and Georgian scholars in the environs of Mt. Casius; their study on the spatial dissemination of churches, monasteries, and monastic communities was essential to exploring the thriving spiritual landscapes that straddled the slopes of the Mons Mirabilis between the fifth and eleventh centuries.² To be sure, credit goes also to the Byzantinist Jean Mécérian for having investigated the surroundings of the Wondrous Mountain and the fields of ruins that had framed the life and miracles of St. Simeon the Younger, which he eventually went on to excavate between 1932 and 1939. Of course this exploration had been conceived as a pendant to the flurry of activities taking place at the church of St. Simeon in the Jabal al-Siman,³ which had hitherto played a key role in illustrating the miraculous life of the stylite. But, as with the other archaeological ventures in the region, the impending war brought the excavations to an abrupt halt. While the research of Mécérian as well as that of those who followed in his footsteps put much emphasis on the making and evolution of the Christian landscape and their bearing on the local communities, it also offers rare yet important insights onto sites dating to the classical and late antique ages. Thus, this thin documentary evidence can be positively used to illustrate how the lower Orontes Valley was in every sense an essential component of Antioch's landscape long before – and after – the Flavian emperors built a formidable military district that effectively united Antioch to Seleucia Pieria and their respective territories,⁴ in what may appear as one of antiquity's most remarkable urban systems.

The Seleucid coinage celebrating Antioch and Seleucia's sisterhood under Alexander Balas may be suggestive of the intimate connection that existed between the two cities from their beginnings.⁵ Yet the relationship was articulated more subtly than any manifesto of civic friendship could evoke, nor was their shared past enough to guarantee everlasting concord. Rather, the Orontes had been the key to cementing a relationship that went beyond any institutional schemes: the briskness of traffic along the river was remarkable in both directions, especially between the Delta and Gephyra, and was certainly the most tangible manifestation of the unity between the two cities. Traders, soldiers, fishermen, and entrepreneurs everyday would travel the waters of this fundamental axis of communication. Although colored by heavy rhetorical accents, Libanius' description of this daily routine conjures up the activities of these actors⁶ as well as their struggles with the river's course; a day of upstream navigation could take them all the way to Antioch

from the Delta.⁷ This apparently detached, slowly paced riverine universe, however, was not mere idyllic panorama. It was an extension of Antioch and identified the city, its values, and its religious underpinnings. And, it was also an essential component in the city’s economic landscape and, as such, its well-being mattered to Antiochenes and the authorities. It is no coincidence that Roman emperors from the days of Augustus saw to the Orontes’ maintenance and on more than one occasion promoted robust clean-ups and enlargements of the river-bed to facilitate its navigability. They are as attested by maintenance operations conducted successively under the Flavians, Valens, and Justinian.⁸ In sum, historical events affecting either community over time resonated along the course of the Orontes, for good or ill. Antioch and Seleucia were good siblings, bound together by a river and the agencies that harnessed its resources.

This chapter focuses on the region west of Antioch and the lower Orontes and studies its settlement evolution in relation to the city. How this district was physically incorporated and perceived by Antiochenes as part of their own territory will receive particular attention. Two factors, in particular, will be noticed: the religious forces that – emanating from Antioch – turned the lower Orontes Valley into a locus of peculiarly Antiochene cults, and the landscape modifications that took place under imperial agencies between the late first and sixth centuries CE.

I THE LOWER ORONTES AND THE “PORT OF ANTIOCH”

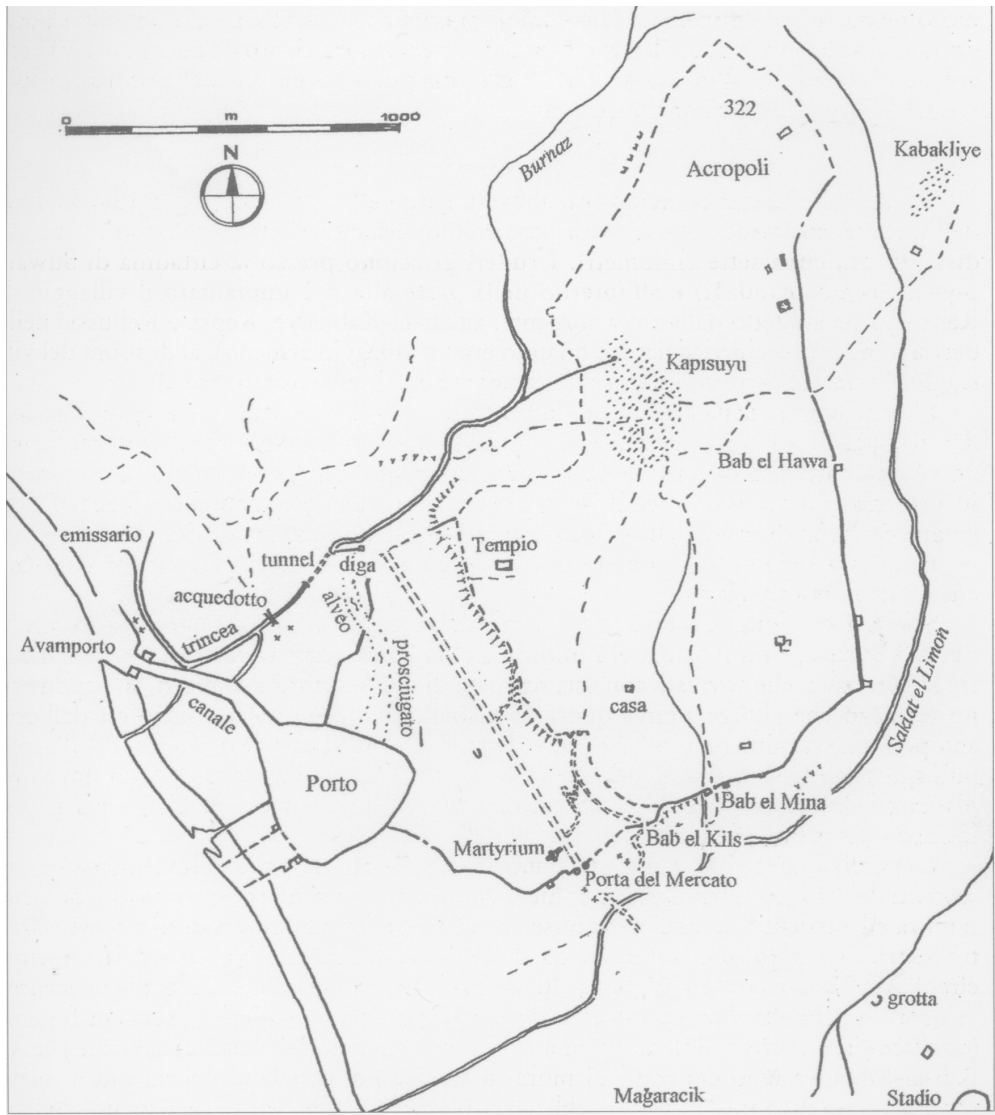
To the South, as we proceeded, was the lofty Jabal el’Akrab, rising 5318 feet above the sea, with its abutments extending to Antioch. To the North, the Beilán range (5337 feet), well stocked with fine forest-trees, chiefly oak, walnut, and fir; and in front the broad expanse of the bay backed by the hills of Antioch, Mount St. Simeon, or Bin-killsch, covered with myrtle, bay, and arbutus, altogether forming a striking and magnificent panorama.⁹

Lieutenant-Colonel Chesney’s 1835 account of his journey along the northern Syrian coast on board the *H.M.S. Columbine* bears witness how sailors in antiquity and in modern times engaged the bay of Seleucia.¹⁰ Concise yet evocative, his narrative conveys the emotions that many a sailor may have experienced as they sought to negotiate this rather non-descript harbor. Much to Chesney’s disquiet, he was not slow to realize that the Greek pilot who had previously claimed familiarity with the coast in reality had never been to this part of Syria; moreover, the ship’s only known spatial reference, the Orontes’ Delta, was late to appear. As the grandiose scenario of northern Syria began to unravel, however, the Musa Dağı, Mt. Casius, Amanus and hills around Mt. Admirabilis in turn began to punctuate the skyline, and the *Columbine* was able to finally tack and lay its anchor in the deep waters of Seleucia’s harbor, “the Bay of Antioch,” in Chesney’s own words.

Now many similar journeys had preceded that of the Columbine, and countless cargoes had followed that route as they approached the delta. One can only imagine the vessels crowding the delta, as they awaited the completion of routine custom operations in preparation for their upstream navigation toward Antioch. A massive Flavian undertaking that linked Antioch to the new military harbor in Seleucia through the Orontes may have spurred traffic on an unprecedented scale from the second century onward.¹¹ Yet, more than being simply a corridor for the swift deployment of troops within the Province of Syria it created an indissoluble cord that united the two cities in military and tangentially, in commercial terms. The construction of the *Dipotamia* canal north of Antioch, tunnels, dams, and obviously the harbor, as well as routine maintenance *purgationes*¹² were an orchestrated effort carried out by the Syrian legions and a departure in Roman city planning; that is, the realization of an entire district serving the provincial capital. Reminiscent of grandiose enterprises such as the opening of the imperial harbors at Portus near Ostia and carried out by Claudius, and especially Trajan, this project spearheaded a new axis of movement for traffic between east and west and assigned to the control of Antioch one of the empire's most sensitive regions. In this perspective, the Orontes became the backbone of a district that unconsciously grew to support the fortunes of the Roman empire; from the days of the governor Ulpian Traianus under Vespasian,¹³ down to the early decades of the sixth century CE under the patriarch Ephraem,¹⁴ over time a series of building programs ensured the connectivity of riverine roads, the navigability of the lower Orontes basin, and the good drainage of the Orontes Valley from the Amuq Lake down to the estuary. Through these imperial initiatives the river was gradually perceived by Antiochenes and foreigners alike as an extension of Antioch, and as Seleucia the city's natural sea outlet.¹⁵ Libanius' numerous references to the city's ports make it plain that Seleucia and its vicinity were understood to be an appendix of Antioch.¹⁶

How gradually Seleucia was incorporated into this new district, serving Antioch in ways similar to the Peireus and Anthens needs to be examined because Seleucia, in origin, had been designed as a legitimate, independent polis, and perhaps a Seleucid capital. To tackle this issue we should probably once again look back at the days of Seleukos Nikator and the characteristics of Seleucia's foundation.

Much has been said about the role of Seleucia in Nikator's scheme of foundations. Whether the city was designed to serve as a capital is an issue that has long been a matter of dispute.¹⁷ Textual sources and the evidence of coins don't resolve the issue and I will limit the present discussion to the archaeological evidence. Seleucia's monumental market gate and its impressive architectural program may illustrate this linkage well:¹⁸ flanked by two semi-circular towers, it showcases a décor made of niches, recesses, and engaged



5.1. Seleucia Pieria: the city plan, adapted from Boselli's original drawing (from Uggeri2006)

columns, reminiscent of many monumental arches in the East. It acquires particular meaning considered the terminal point of the 25 km road that started from Antioch's Daphne Gate, skirted St. Spyridon, and followed the right bank of the Orontes.

All the same, it may well have been in Seleukos' plans to make Seleucia one of the capitals of the Seleucid kingdom as well as his final resting place. Hence, in the aftermath of his key victory against Antigonos in 301 BCE, he offered sacrifices to Zeus on Mt. Casius and shortly thereafter founded the city at a site seven miles north of the Orontes' delta, near modern Samandağ, on the steep slopes of Mt. Corypheus. The latter juts out of the final stretch of Amanus

known as Skopelos or Mauron Oros, peaked by the high Musa Dağı, a conspicuous massif covered by shrubs and maquis for most of its extension. Many Armenian villages and several Georgian monasteries were located here, none of which survives, with the exception of one, identified by a Georgian manuscript is that of the “Wood of Life” near the village of Yoğun Oluk, southwest of Antioch.¹⁹ The Armenian church of St. Thomas (Sourp-Thomas) near Sürütme is also still visible.²⁰

As with Antioch on the Orontes, Seleucia Pieria may have expanded thanks to a sequence of building programs. One such development, comprising the lower city and the port, is attested by Polybius, and may date to the late third century BCE.²¹ With the fluctuations in authority between Seleucid and Ptolemaic rule in the region, Seleucia thrived as a commercial hub in particular during the days of Pompey the Great. Later, under the mandate of the Flavian emperors the city was inserted in the grand scheme of militarization of the Orontes basin, which was only completed in the Antonine period. A new artificial harbor was built and along with it came a vast program of canals and diversion of waters to ease the navigability of the Orontes and prevent the silting of the harbor itself.²² As with subsequent drainage plans,²³ these initiatives were orchestrated from Antioch, and had fundamental importance for the settlement narrative of the region because the Orontes corridor and the Syrian coast began to be treated as a unit.

We must keep in mind that the Syrian coastline has a shortage of harbors, with the exception of Tyre and Arados, cities that had harnessed small islands and their coves since the Phoenicians. Seleucia had to rather arrange the insertion of a *cothon*, that is an internal harbor, in a way much similar to that of Carthage.²⁴ Its main obstacle, however, was once again represented by torrents and their unpredictable behavior. The waters of the Burnaz, Mt. Corypheus’ main stream, had to be diverted westward so as to prevent the silting of the internal harbor. To that end, a dam in combination with a spectacular tunnel was created in the Flavian period. This meant that the stream would run to the exterior of the city walls, and eventually empty its waters north of the port-entrance.²⁵ Thanks to these interventions, Seleucia became home of the *Classis Syriaca*, later of the *Classis Seleucena* and of detachments from the fleets at Misenum and Ravenna, as attested by a rich corpus of funerary inscriptions dating to the second century CE and more probably to the Parthian campaigns conducted by Lucius Verus.²⁶ All in all, the eastern campaigns of the second and third centuries CE fully harnessed the resources of Seleucia’s harbor. With the tetrarchic era, however, in spite of repairs carried out under Diocletian and – later – Constantius, the harbor’s role began to dwindle, a process accelerated by the rise of new hubs at Tyre and Antarados further south along the Syrian coast. That the city’s abandonment may have started at this time is a cogent hypothesis, in fact the 370 AD *purgatio*

of the lower Orontes and its delta may have been designed to accommodate a smaller, riverine port, perhaps the ancestor of Bytyllion, the port of the Justinianic period.²⁷ Centuries after the demise of Al-Mina,²⁸ a new emporion regulated traffic along the Orontes and served Antioch in ways that were presumably more efficient than Seleucia. The ancient imperial port was evidently cut off, while the blows of the Isaurian raids further aggravated the situation at Seleucia. But, the early sixth century's catastrophic earthquakes and the Sasanian king Khusro's invasion brought Seleucia's city-life to a halt; aside from random mentions of its bishops, Seleucia was heard of no more.²⁹

As for the archaeology, very little is known about Seleucia. cursory investigations were conducted by Perdrizet in the 20s and the Princeton team in the late 30s, but limited to a handful of houses and their mosaic pavements, a Doric, peripteral temple of the Hellenistic period, the so-called Market Gate and finally, the late fifth century CE magnificent martyrion near to it, a building that, in spite of the city's recession, was restored after the AD 526 earthquake.³⁰

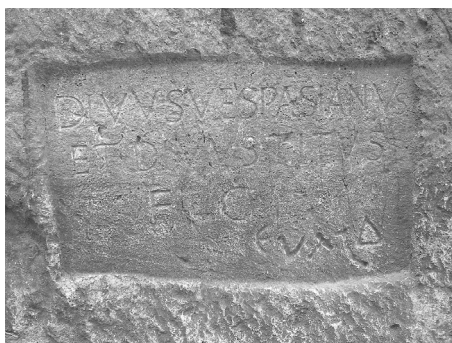
Other trial excavations were made in select sectors of the city in order to test the configuration of the city-plan: one of these trenches showed the presence of a colonnaded street and plaza in the lower city, and a row of shops or granaries adjacent to the internal harbor.³¹

It appears that Seleucia's city-plan came to terms with its difficult terrain through a system of terraces. Strewn over an upper and lower city, its configuration is reminiscent of a Pergamene urban *mise en scène*, on a smaller scale. This design moreover shared Antioch's same susceptibility to the flood caused by the runoff of Mt. Corypheus' numerous streams and springs.³² The city walls are of interest: stretches of polygonal masonry survive on the eastern flank of the acropolis, and near the gate of Bab el-Mina, while the rest of the perimeter uses an isodomic technique that seemingly harks back to the early days of the Seleucid foundation. Measuring approximately 5 km in length, these walls were reinforced by strong rectangular and semicircular towers as well as by a system of posterns and drainage channels (Figure 5.2).³³ Outside the perimeter of the walls, along the road leading to Apamea are a hippodrome (now covered by maquis and shrubs) mentioned by Polybius and noted by Toselli at the beginning of the past century,³⁴ and the necropolis at Mağaracık. Today, Seleucia's main attraction, however, is the so-called Titus Tüneli, the spectacular tunnel that diverted the torrential waters of the Burnaz and thus avoided the inundation and silting up of the bay. This tunnel was the centerfold of the Flavian-Antonine project, realized thanks to the piercing of Mt. Corypheus' western reaches. Several inscriptions around the harbor, referring to Vespasian and Titus, leave no doubts about the agency involved in these works and underscore the size of this undertaking as without par (Figure 5.3).

A mesh of approximately fifty Hellenistic through Late Roman sites was recorded by a Turkish archaeological survey in the early 2000s.³⁵ While the



5.2. Seleucia: the city walls on the Akropolis



5.3. IGLS 1131: the inscription is near the entrance of the so-called Tunnel of Titus and commemorates the completion of the imperial harbor project by the divine Vespasian and Titus

spacing, chronology, and cultural identifiers of each individual nucleation cannot be determined by the superficial character of the research, this evidence nevertheless informs a settlement pattern that radiated from Seleucia, framed the harbor and reached the Orontes' delta, thus taking up in full the fertility of a narrow coastal plain. Most sites, it seems, occupied low elevation terraces (100–150 m) and on hills in proximity to the Orontes, the situation of the *House of the Drinking Contest* (S 18 K), the *House of Dyonisos and Ariadne* (S 17 F), the *House of Cilicia* (S 19 K), that were partially investigated by the Princeton expedition,

and date to the early third century CE. The *House of the Drinking Contest*, in particular, introduces a scheme that is common to most domestic units in the Antiochene and may be representative of an aesthetic *koiné* that may have originated in Antioch: a dining hall opening onto a portico that led to a *nymphaeum* variably placed inside a court (Figure 5.4).

Beautifully arranged on the slope that gently downgrades toward the Mediterranean shore, the *House of the Drinking Contest* owes its name to the subject of its *triclinium*'s decorative program, that is a mythical symposium with



5.4. House of the drinking Contest and Mt. Casius towering in the background

Herakles and Dionysus and their drinking bout. While the theme is in harmony with the nature of the room and reiterates a subject that is redolent of the aesthetics of the Greek East, the pavements of portico and courtyards hint at marine subjects that were seemingly popular in the region starting with the turn of the second century CE.³⁶ Here panels with fishing *erotes* and especially the large pavement with a wide assortment of fishes not only produce an itinerary within the house, but also suggest the frivolous tone of these representations, a hallmark in Antiochene visual culture. Detached from complicated intellectual allusions, these pavements have the quality of literary genres like Oppian's *On Fishing*, a survey of marine species apparently written at the time of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus that may have been popular in Syria and Cilicia. The design of the building, moreover, reflects its deliberate insertion into its landscape as well as its subtle interior-exterior dialectic. Although ordered by the geometric configuration of the rooms and the routes dictated by mosaics, this domestic space also reveals a logic of conception and visualization through sight lines that extend to the landscape. Accordingly, the shoreline, the piedmont, and the vista over the Musa Dağ formed the grid that oriented the building; large windows on the southern wall,³⁷ in particular, might have contributed to the opening of space and thus reduced the inside/outside divide. The interior of the house contributes to this aspect; the screens of columns that framed the *nymphaeum* court and its waterworks may have served to reduce the enclosing volumes of walls and give a sense of natural weightlessness to the architecture. In this shaping of the domestic space we can

recognize a key element that is shared by the Seleucia houses that stemmed from those in Antioch and Daphne, as we shall see: the fundamental freedom of the builders to articulate space in their own terms, moving beyond the constraints of symmetry and function, to forge a novel architectural idiom embellished by Antiochene visual conventions.

But, we should also keep in mind that Seleucia was the first foundation among the *Tetrapolis* and functioned as port-city from its foundation. Its settlement superseded the emporion at Al-Mina, the well-known site that Sir Leonard Woolley excavated between 1935 and 1937 near a former branch of the Orontes, situated a few Kilometers north of the actual mouth of the river.³⁸ Much has been written about Al-Mina, and not least about the alleged presence there of a Greek settlement dating to the eighth century BCE. Such discussion lies beyond the scope of this work. Rather, it is appropriate to focus on the ebb and flow of human occupation on this site, especially after its eclipse that coincided with the foundation at Seleucia.³⁹ It was re-occupied in the sixth century CE, when, as mentioned, the role Seleucia's harbor had already declined.⁴⁰ A new small commercial hub equipped with warehouses and a church in all likelihood rose from the ashes of ancient Al-Mina, plausibly coinciding with the small fluvial port of Bytyllion, mentioned by Malalas.⁴¹ Although investigated in cursory fashion by Woolley, this Late Antique settlement may have begun to operate at the time of Antioch's heightened exchanges with the eastern Mediterranean, Constantinople, the Black Sea or Egypt. In this vein, we should consider a document that is particularly illuminating as far as the chronology of Bytyllion goes. Probably at the time of Justinian, under the mandate of the *Comes Orientis* Flavios Euphronios and the auspices of an unknown bishop of Seleucia, the imperial administration established the fees (one *keration* per each 1,000 *modii*, approximately 8 tons) to be paid to the fluvial port's *curiosi*, that is the imperial employees whose capacity to oversee trade and confiscate goods evidently had to be regulated or, more likely curbed by official regulations.⁴² Dagron and Feissel's study of the four fragments of this marble slab hardly needs any discussion, let alone emendation. Nor do there seem to be any doubts about the provenience of the inscription, in all likelihood from the vicinity Samandağ. What the text suggests, however, is the presence of commercial riverine traffic from Cilicia and Egypt, among other places, carried out by small vessels that would average a freight of approximately 1,000 *modii* (approximately 6 tons) in line with the size of commercial boats in the fourth and fifth centuries CE.⁴³ What is more, such tonnage coheres well with the port's own capacity, described by Malalas as *Ormisterion*, that is a facility designed to serve *dromons*.⁴⁴ It seems apparent then that the inscription identifies activities that occurred at Bytyllion; we may thus surmise that by the time of Justinian, or more plausibly after the great earthquake of AD 526 the small fluvial port

had superseded the artificial harbor at Seleucia, which may no longer have been serviceable on account of silting. Ironically, Antioch contributed to eclipsing its former twin-sister.

The fluvial port on the Orontes lingered on for centuries to come, intermittently, as its later uses under the caliph Mu'taṣim in the ninth century and as the crusader Port St. Simeon attest. But the fortunes of Seleucia and its harbor were forgotten by the time the Arab invasion changed the course of history in the Greek East.

The slow demise of Seleucia in the later fourth century CE, after the emperor Constantius' efforts to revamps the outlet,⁴⁵ didn't apparently affect Antioch, which in turn stimulated the emergence of new commercial outlets. Seleucia, however, in the centuries to come continued to serve Antioch in a different way. The stripping of its monumental colonnade for the construction of a new portico in the capital under the *Comes Orientis* Modestus during the days of Constantius II (337–361) is interesting on two levels.⁴⁶ First, it accords with the practices of Constantine the Great in the making of his capital on the Bosphorus; Antioch, too, had not been exempt from paying its dues to the new imperial foundation. The removal of the statue of a bronze hyena and she-wolf as reported by Niketas Choniates in his *De Signis* makes plain that, regardless of their status, all cities of the east had to contribute to making Constantinople an open air museum.⁴⁷ Second, the stripping of Seleucia's columns is a good example of the hauling of the materials upstream along the Orontes. To be sure, Antioch had no shortage of quarries in her environs; both the Amanus and the eastern slopes of Mt. Silpius have vast resources of ashlar, granite and limestone that had been essential to building programs for centuries. Yet, as Seleukos had done with the stones of Antigonía – centuries before Modestus – the reuse of monuments rather than building anew appeared the best course of action for the opportunity at hand. Of course, Modestus is better known as a foe of Antioch's *honorati* and as a Torquemada of his time, invested with the powers to eradicate sorcery and divination by Theodosius, a mandate that peaked with the Scythopolis' trials, among a number of other unspecified crimes.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, whatever the reason for the transfer of the columns, the symbolic value of stripping Seleucia of its décor and dynastic prestige may just have been outright highhanded treatment of the twin sister of Antioch now fallen in disgrace. Simply put, Antioch could dispose of Seleucia as she saw fit. What shape and form the new *porticus* in Antioch had we are not in the position to tell; nor is the function of the enterprise any more comprehensible, but Modestus's aims were most likely no different than those of Zoilus, Callistus, and Anatolius, to wit *Consulares Syriae* who some time around AD 437/438 promoted the construction of basilicas and stoas that bore their names, and sought to leave their imprint on Antioch's cityscape in perpetuity.⁴⁹ Their projects, however, adhered to a formulaic and

widespread post-Constantinian trend whereby imperial administrators had complete authority over civic building programs in most cities of the empire.⁵⁰

2 TRIPTOLEMOS, ZEUS AND ST. BARLAAM ON MT. CASIUS

Sometime in the early first century CE one Damasias from Laodikeia visited the sanctuary of Zeus Casius and dedicated a statue to the Tyche of his hometown. Both an effort to showcase civic pride on holy ground and to secure his hometown good fortune, Damasias, it seems, fulfilled all the obligations that such acts of piety entailed, including obtaining the permission from the authorities in charge, namely the *proboulé* of Seleucia.⁵¹ As for the iconography of the statue that he donated, we can presume it may have been a copy of the Tyche archetype par excellence, that of Euthychides, by that time an iconography replicated in every media. But that is not all, for it appears that Mount Casius was within the jurisdiction of Seleucia and thus the city may have been responsible for the finances, maintenance and security of the sanctuary. And Seleucia had its own just claim over Zeus Casius, as the first city of the Tetrapolis and its nearest patron. Civic issues bearing the legend ZEYS KASIOS minted between Trajan and Macrinus attest to a decisive attempt to establish its authority over the sanctuary.⁵² Yet, these slogans were of no avail; no institutional configuration could sever the fundamental ties between Antioch and the mountain. The city treated Mt. Casius as its own religious milieu: Zeus Casius was an essential component in the making of their community, and thus remained for centuries the locus that captured the religious aspirations of the Antiochenes. Libanius made it clear that Antioch boasted two sanctuaries dedicated to Zeus: one in the city, and the other “on the mountain.”⁵³ That the mountain in object is Mt. Casius is a definite possibility.

Peaking the skyline of southern Syria at 1,728 m the silhouette of Mt. Casius (Jabal al-‘Aqra, Kel Dağı, Yayla Dağı) can hardly be missed, especially as one gazes westward from Daphne on a sunny winter morning (Map 6). Austere looking and now almost bereft of the vast forests that once covered its slopes, it lies some 10 km south of the Orontes’ delta. Today it serves as the boundary between the Turkish and Syrian coasts. Its ecosystems in antiquity as today reflected the general features of the Jabal al-‘Aqra, though endowed with more sources of fresh water and presents an equal breadth of flora and fauna.

From the heights of Mt. Casius came the ancestral cult of Zeus Casius. Throughout antiquity its syncretism with Baal and Horus, as well as the protection of castaways granted him devotees in far flung places such as Lusitania, Sicily and Delos.⁵⁴ More importantly though, Mt. Casius was the site of a mythical struggle between Zeus and Typhon, which reverberated in the showdown between Seleukos and Antigonos. An array of textual sources,



MAP 6. The Region of the lower Orontes Valley

from Ugaritic accounts to Hellenistic fragments mark the god's transition from his Phoenician–Canaanite genesis to his Graeco–Roman counterpart.⁵⁵

About its relevance to foundation myths and the cult of Zeus Casius much has already been said in Chapter 2. Strabo, however, remarks that Seleukos Nikator settled in Antioch the descendants of Triptolemus, yet another demi-god implicated in the founding of Antioch.⁵⁶ Allegedly, the Antiochenes regarded him as their founding hero and celebrated a festival in his honor on Mt. Casius, a tradition also reported by Libanius.⁵⁷ Contingents of Argives and Athenians may have contributed to the popularity of the Eleusinian hero and to his transference to Antioch, and ultimately to the creation of a religious narrative that was centered on Mt. Casius. Although an argument from silence, festivals linking the city Eleusinion⁵⁸ to the mountain, as well as the enactment of the mysteries may have been the key-events in the worship of Triptolemus.

Of course, cities competed for these symbols; Tarsus, in origin Antiocheia on the Pyramos, had also appropriated Triptolemus in articulating its foundation myths, and fictitious accounts about origins continued to circulate during the second century CE, that were vehemently called into question by

rhetoricians like Dio of Prusa. But these may not have affected Antioch on the Orontes, whose repertoire of mythical founders had no match. All in all, a potent, eponymous Antiochene cult cast its long shadow onto the region's main landmark, and religious festivals and rituals cemented this linkage.

We should also remember that Antioch's most momentous events are intimately tied to this massif, as if there lay the ancestral essence of the city, its miraculous existence, and indeed, survival. It is just fitting that the name Kassiodoros enjoyed much favor among Antiochenes throughout classical and late antiquity.⁵⁹

In more concrete terms, however, Seleukos' agenda gave Zeus Casius center stage in the narrative of the city's foundation, and established the indissoluble link between the city and the mountain. In conformity with this religious spirit, Trajan, Hadrian and Julian⁶⁰ are allegedly among those who reinforced the prominence of the cult of Zeus Casius and its ties to the city. These emperors sacrificed on the mountain at critical junctures during their residence in Antioch, whether on the eve of military campaigns or as in an open act of complacency, and in so doing they aligned themselves with the city of Antioch, and perhaps more to the point, with its founder.

But, it may also appear that the connection between Antioch and Mount Casius exceeded any territorial concerns to establish rational boundary markers or city limits for Antioch. The mountain was effectively embedded in the basin that radiated from the city, one which transcended topographical rationality and brought together plains, mountains and rivers on other grounds. In Greek fashion, Mt Casius may have represented the *horos* of Antioch's territory, that is its natural boundary; but, beyond it, lay the vastness of the Mediterranean, Cyprus and the West.

It should be noted, however, that no traces of classical sites survive on the mountain. It may well be that the heavy presence of Early Christian settlement has erased the main religious foci there, whether on the summit where sacrifices would be carried out or the main eastern terrace where most building activity took place in antiquity. No visible trace of the sanctuary of Zeus Casius survives, but as Djobadze cogently suggested, it may lie on one of the plateaus that jut out from the massif eastward, at 1250 meters a.s.l.

The conspicuous remains of the church and monastery of St. Barlaam, the earliest phase of which dates to the Justinianic age now occupy the entire plateau.⁶¹ Yet, architectural spolia and in particular, large ashlar blocks embedded in the temenos may reasonably antedate the construction of the church. Tiles and brick stamps bearing the legend *Dios Kassiou* found in the vicinity of the church as well as one weathered imperial dedication further strengthen this possibility.⁶² The struggle between the Saint and the demons that allegedly populated the mountain may have well come to a halt with the definite burying of the sanctuary under the monastery and impressive vaults of the church.⁶³

Further up, near the summit of Mt. Casius is a tumulus that appears to be the byproduct of centuries of sacrifices and hecatombs; traces of bronze coins were noted under a substantial accumulation of rocks and pebbles blackened by the action of fire.⁶⁴ But, what makes the mountain summit remarkable is the 360 degree vista and, in particular, the line of sight that unites the mountain to Antioch.

In more mundane terms, a mesh of roads connected the sanctuary to Antioch and the other cities of northern Syria. The road between Antioch and Laodikeia served the sanctuary well, cutting through the heights of the Kosseir massif; today the modern road follows exactly the ancient itinerary; at El-Ordou (Urdu) it bifurcates leading northwest into the Casius massif and southwest toward Laodikeia. This was indeed the highway that Theophanes and his entourage took in order to complete the last leg of the journey that they had started a month earlier in Nikiu (western Nile delta);⁶⁵ along with a pack of Sarmatian body guards he apparently covered the distance between Laodikeia and Antioch in a day (64 Roman miles), stopping at the station of Hydata, the location of which is unknown, but presumably to be situated in the Casius massif. Still, another Roman road from the Casius ran all the way to Seleucia, following a trajectory that also appears in the Peutinger Table.⁶⁶ Connectivity in the interior of the massif would be ensured by a set of secondary roads, attested by at least two milestones of the mid second century CE and what appears to have been a bridge near the village of Olahçı.

What kind of communities these roads cutting through the massif were designed to serve lies beyond our grasp; timber farmers, however, may have been part of the equation, all the more as the region was integrated in the military plan of Seleucia, and supply of wood was critical. A few villages can be identified, and beside Hydata mentioned earlier, two small towns may have been the region's main foci in antiquity: Akra and Bezga, the latter corresponding to ancient Bexa.⁶⁷ While the latter can be safely situated in proximity to the modern village, the former, still unidentified, may reasonably date to the classical period⁶⁸ and relate to the later toponyms of the region, known in Arabic as Jabal al-'Aqra. Be that as it may, at the time of the 1920s archaeological surveys the road was still dotted with primarily Armenian villages that didn't apparently show traces of earlier occupation. This observation, however, must be taken with prudence; it is worth reiterating that these surveys were aimed at assessing the standing architecture of sacred buildings⁶⁹ and were not geared toward the analysis of settlement through the ages, nor was there an interest in using ceramics as cultural proxies.

Overall, we have no means to gauge the extent of ancient settlement in the environs of Mt. Casius; the presence of small clusters of villages, farms, and Armenian monasteries near Kessab (Keseb), three medieval churches and monasteries on the coast between Mt. Casius and Al-Mina⁷⁰ may be indicative

of the sparse patterns that dictated human occupation in the area. Whether these configurations were the byproducts of earlier settlement is difficult to determine, but the data from a cursory survey in the Kosseir relief (Kuseyr Yaylası) suggests the presence of clusters of Hellenistic to late Roman settlement, spreading unevenly across the southwestern most reaches of the Jabal al-‘Aqra invested in the production of olive oil.⁷¹

Lastly, imperial roads that replicated earlier itineraries secured connectivity between cities and the religious milieu on the mountain. It appears that most roadwork in the Mt. Casius region occurred in the Antonine period, apparently in synchrony with the completion of the military harbor at Seleucia. This network of roads was also effective in integrating Mt. Casius into what was perceived to be a legitimate portion of Antioch’s territory. Reaching Seleucia and Laodicea on the Syrian coast, they radiated out from Antioch in an effort to formalize the imperial imprint and the role of the provincial capital.

3 THE LOWER ORONTES VALLEY AND THE THAUMASTON ORON

While the picture of ancient settlement in the Mt. Casius district is patchy at best, a more robust framework of rural settlement tied to Antioch can be found in the southwestern Orontes Valley, on the surrounding heights of Mons Admirabilis and, particularly on the Daphne plateau.

To this end, we shall follow the Orontes upstream from its estuary, as it negotiates high-reliefs and deeply incised gorges that for a riverine landscape much are at odds with the flatness of the Amuq Plain.⁷² Indeed, the stretch of the river in its last 8 km before entering the plain of Seleucia is noteworthy. Sandwiched between the reliefs of the Ziyaret Dağı and the Samandağı Tepe, it works its way through a deeply incised, and altogether dramatic canyon. Here in the southwestern Antiochene, ancient settlement took the low plain as well as the terraces and foothills of surrounding mountains, in apparent alignment with the main axes of communication that connected the city to the Mediterranean. Once again, this was a heavily labored landscape, one in which the modifications effected by the army and the imperial administration impacted settlement for centuries. Rather than a hindrance, the ecological barriers posed by the reliefs framing the valley and their rough slopes facilitated the channeling of movement along the roads that ran across the valley floor, thus stimulating interaction among human communities. As mentioned, the Orontes from the days of Augustus underwent constant manipulations, while the imperial agencies, on the other hand, enhanced and fortified the axes of communication for their own ends. The bridge on the Orontes built at the time of Lucius Verus near modern Sinanlı, of which only the piers survive,⁷³ and those commissioned by Ephraem in AD 524 on the two Melas (Büyük Karasu and Küçük Karasu), tributaries of the Orontes illustrate the determined

intervention of the imperial administrators in modifying this landscape and building the infrastructure that served the capital city. The works of Ephraem, however, may have also had a less mundane scope, as we shall see.

A mesh of elusive communities mentioned in the Life of St. Simeon the Younger and St. Martha in all likelihood studded the valley floor and drew sustenance from the traffic on the network of roads, as well as from the usual combination of fruit orchards, olive groves and vineyards.⁷⁴ Immersed in the rolling hills gently downgrading into the lower Orontes Valley, they viewed Antioch as the *μεγαλόπολις* or as *Ἀντιόχεια ἡ μεγάλη*: the chasm between the realities of rural and city life could not be wider. Although archaeologically unknown, the *χωρίον Ἀντᾶ*, *χωρίον Διδᾶ*, *χωρίον Κασσᾶ*, to cite but a few villages mentioned in the text, were communities identified by anthroponyms, thus bearing the name of the landlord: Antas,

Didas, and Kassas, respectively. As demonstrated by Feissel, these communities' adherence to traditional Hellenic nomenclature and the occurrence of the same names in the epigraphic record of Antioch suggest a coalescing of these communities between the first and third centuries CE.⁷⁵ Particularly indicative appears to be a site referred as *τόπον Ἐλεφαντῶν*, a toponym that may resonate with memories of the Seleucid founders and their royal iconography, as has already been inferred for the Tetrapylon of the Elephants on Antioch's Island.⁷⁶ As for the remaining sites in this group, finally, they either bespeak a Latin influence or indicate the presence of buildings like baths and water-mills. Yet, for all their semantic poignancy, they remain physically completely unknown.

Nor is there archaeological evidence as one ascends the heights of the Wondrous Mountain. Eighteen km west of Antioch, it rises as an isolated, barren hill that overlooks the plain of Seleucia (Figure 5.6). Traditionally known as Samandağ, Mons Admirabilis, or *Thaumaston Oron*, (479 m a.s.l.), it is bordered to the north by the modern Antakya-Samamandağ road, on the east by the Great Melas (Büyük Kara Cay) and to the south by the Orontes and the Roman road that connected Antioch to Seleucia.⁷⁷ The mountain owes its renown to the stylite saint (521–592) who practiced his ascetic virtues from the top of the mountain for forty years; crowds would flock from everywhere to



5.5. The sanctuary of St. Simeon the Younger



5.6. The springs of Daphne (Harbiye)

enter the precinct of the sanctuary. The latter is a small rectangular enclosure (61 × 68 m) girded by an outer wall, and contains three churches plus various annexes. The base of the pillar of the stylite was inscribed in an octagon almost entirely cut in the bedrock that represented the centerpiece of the complex (Figure 5.6). Overall, the ground plan of the site has long been held as a replica, albeit on a smaller scale, the more famous sanctuary of Qal'at Sem'an in the Jabal Sem'an.⁷⁸ Yet In her recent study Ayşe Henry shows that the sculptural and architectural idioms at St. Simeon the Younger were unique and developed independently of other contemporary pilgrimage sites. More importantly, she shows how the genesis and evolution of this building was tied to the religious and social realities of Antioch. Put simply, an Antiochene agency may have instigated the establishment of the Christian sanctuary in a territory that was, at least institutionally, under Seleucia. That the agency in object corresponded to Ephraem, in the aftermath of the AD 540 Persian sack, is the suggestive possibility Henry puts forth.⁷⁹

According to its excavators the sanctuary may have superseded a military installation.⁸⁰ Cisterns for garrisons may have preceded the appearance of the monastic settlement in the sixth century, as attested by structures located outside the complex. Who benefitted from them, whether civilians or soldiers, is a matter of guesswork. The text of the Life of St. Simeon,⁸¹ however, highlights the presence of these pre-existing structures outside the complex, which were in use in the “Greek times of old” as the text reads.⁸² This fleeting glimpse of a distant past and the existence of a tradition reported by the chronicler are surprising; not only do they constitute a variant to a text that deliberately eschews harking back to the past, but also may illustrate what people in those districts believed were their origins: the Greek settlements established by Seleukos. While this cannot be proven, it is nevertheless possible that “Hellene” in this context is used with no reference to “pagan.” Perhaps the conspicuous, abandoned *spolia* found at Nahrılı Köy on the foothills of the mountain substantiate the possibility of this earlier settlement.⁸³

4 OF ABDUCTED MAIDENS, SAINTS, AND SPLENDID VILLAE: RESEARCH AT DAPHNE

*In 1268 the Berber Sultans seized the city, burnt it and either killed or deported its population. Antioch turned into a modest village thereafter, and Daphne fell in ruins.*⁸⁴

Dussaud's remark on the fall of Antioch in 1268 and the subsequent demise of the once flourishing suburb of Daphne captures the drama that befell the city in the thirteenth century; for all its prosaic exaggeration, however, it is fair to say that Antioch never fully recovered from the blows of the siege. Nor did Daphne, Antioch's southwestern development, the seat of Apollo's sanctuary,

and for centuries Antioch's identifier. Daphne grew in synchrony with Antioch on a prominent plateau overlooking the Orontes; only in 1268 was the unity created by Seleukos Nikator brought to an end.

The township of Harbiye, situated 6 km southwest of Antioch as the crow flies, is Daphne's modern incarnation. The urban sprawl of Antakya hasn't spared these suburbs, which still represent a rather popular retreat, especially during the summer months when, thanks to its higher altitude, the plateau is swept by pleasant, soothing breezes from the Orontes Valley (Figure 5.6). Thriving orchards, poplars and olive groves were long the staple vegetation at Daphne, so much so that early travelers were invariably unable to identify any archaeological features.⁸⁵

The plateau has the shape of a rectangle, with its long sides measuring approximately 1.7 km, and the short side 1.3 km. In antiquity, Daphne was thickly wooded and sluiced by the crystal clear water of its springs; farmland dotted by olive groves and orchards on rolling hills framed the growth of this remarkable community. Today, only on its southernmost and highest tip is some of the original configuration, preserved amidst lively *lokantalar* and hotels, in a thickly wooded environment.

Antioch articulated its ties with Daphne through built infrastructure and its religious primacy. As for the former, Antioch's columned street effectively connected the city from its Cherubin (Daphne) Gate to this suburb as if the latter were indeed an extension of the great city;⁸⁶ today, Yayladağı Yolu replicates exactly that route. Countless events along this road, however, illustrate the link between the two entities: the magnificent parade of Antiochos IV's army in 166 BCE, laden with chariots and elephants and so vividly chronicled by Polybius is an eloquent example of Daphne becoming venue for a parade that may have started in the heart of Antioch.⁸⁷ Yet Antiochia and Daphne were even more strongly bound together by the network of aqueducts that tapped into the *theatron* of Daphne's springs,⁸⁸ an artificial reservoir that may have looked like a conspicuous *castellum aquarum*, similar perhaps to that at Hierapolis in Phrygia. Overall, between Seleukos Nikator and Justinian an array of water supply systems designed to haul fresh water straddled the heights of the Mt. Silpius massif. Remains of these buildings and their abrupt changes of direction evidence the sophisticated engineering that evolved with time.⁸⁹ In his effort to map these aqueducts and their destinations, Gunnar Brands identified at least seven different aqueducts of varying dates, each negotiating the steep slope of Mt. Silpius in a different fashion.⁹⁰ It is quite apparent that these discrepancies are to be explained by these aqueducts' intended terminal points. Most urban baths – built by imperial largesse – were located on the rolling slopes of the mountain in the Kerateion district, and were in all likelihood fed by these aqueducts.⁹¹ One monument that bears witness to these building programs is the heavily battered section of two *foRNICES*



5.7. The aqueduct of Hadrian; two arches surviving amidst Antakya's southern developments

that underpinned the Trajanic/Hadrianic project, an impressive undertaking that overcame the difficult terrain between Daphne and Antioch through a mix of tunnels, bridges, and canals. (Figure 5.7). Lastly, it is likely that a system of villages and estates strengthened the link between Antioch and Daphne. One such establishment, the *epokia* of Kassiope located in the vicinity of Daphne may attest to settlement modules comparable to those noted in the Amuq Plain.⁹²

Above and beyond the physical link between Antioch and Daphne, one cannot stress enough, however, the importance that Daphne had for the city of Antioch in religious terms, and, to a greater degree for the Greek East. The festivals, Olympic games, and cults that were celebrated in this milieu put Daphne on the map of the ancient world,⁹³ so that for a long time it served to identify Antioch, as attested by the peculiar nomenclature Antioch-near-Daphne. More important still, Daphne was a storehouse of myth as well as Antioch's main religious locus both during pagan and Christian times; on this plateau, myth has it that gods abducted maidens, demigods completed their labors, vied for primacy, and fell victim to the wounds of eternal love. As Cribiore recognized,⁹⁴ Libanius' claim that Daphne was the place where the judgment of Paris took place was in all likelihood grounded in a local belief. The well-known late second century mosaic from the *Atrium House* now at the Louvre that captures the moment when Paris is about to make his decision may attest to that enduring tradition (Figure 1.8). Subtly portraying the tension and anxieties of the moment of truth, it illustrates a myth that was easily recognized by its viewers, and was believed to have unfolded right in the environs of their city. Perhaps the patrons of the *Atrium House* recurred to the image of an enchanted forest and divine beings to appease their longing for the idyllic, luscious landscapes of Daphne. The trees, springs and fresh summer breezes were nowhere to be found on Antioch's island – where the *Atrium House* was located – when the summer months with their scorching heat set in.

Of course, other myths and their local adaptations crowded on this remarkable plateau. Primacy obviously goes to the legend of Apollo and Daphne, with the nymph's metamorphosis into a laurel tree, the furious god's arrow shooting against the ground, and the subsequent foundation of the sanctuary by Seleukos Nikator after the discovery of one of Apollo's gold-tipped arrows. The historical implications and the role of the founder are all too obvious, and, this subject too was celebrated by yet another mosaic from the *House of the Menander* now on exhibit at the Princeton Museum (Figure 5.8).⁹⁵ In it, the

artist's bravura caught the final disappearance of Daphne and the god's vain pursuit. The sense of struggle, metamorphosis, and despair, played out with a swirling fusion of colors is heightened by the bare landscape; the geometric zigzags of the two lateral panels leave the viewer in suspense, taking part in the ever-lasting drama of the god that occurred at that same place.

It is interesting to see how Philostratos vehemently argued against these manipulations and claimed that that the "Syrians"⁹⁶ had somewhat elaborated their version of the myth, by adding to the picture the figure of Ladon:

*For they say that Daphne, the daughter of Ladon, there underwent her metamorphosis, and they have a river flowing there, the Ladon, and a laurel tree is worshipped by them which they say is the one substituted for the maiden; and cypress trees of enormous height surround the Temple, and the ground sends up springs both ample and placid, in which they say Apollo purifies himself by ablution.*⁹⁷



5.8. Apollo and Daphne: the final pursuit (Princeton Art Museum)

Other less explicit myths implicated in the legend of Antioch's foundation also appear in the repertoire of Daphne's visual culture. A head of the gorgon now at the Princeton Museum of art is a good case in point: taken from the *House of the Red Pavement*, this emblema may not simply retain an apotropaic value but also evoke the myth of Perseus, believed to have gone to Antioch after slaying the Medusa.⁹⁸ And what are we to make of the legend of Orontes, buried by nymphs near Daphne – as narrated by Nonnos?⁹⁹ In sum, a unique lamination between a real – or perceived as such – past and myths occurred on the Daphne plateau: gods and nymphs indeed inhabited the groves and were witnesses to the events in their communities. Undoubtedly, for the Antiochenes and their counterparts in Daphne here, on this luscious plateau lay the *omphalos* of the world.

Yet, the local Jewry also had legitimate claims over Daphne: Talmudic tradition names the cities of Hamath and Ribla as predecessors of Antioch and Daphne; what is more, they were also considered stations of the Babylonian exile. The relocation of many Jews in Daphne following the footsteps of the high priest Onias III at the time of Antiochos III and the possible establishment of the *Matrona*, Daphne's prominent synagogue, a temple that was "as profane as the sanctuary of Apollo and populated by demons," may just have enhanced the ties between this community and the site.¹⁰⁰

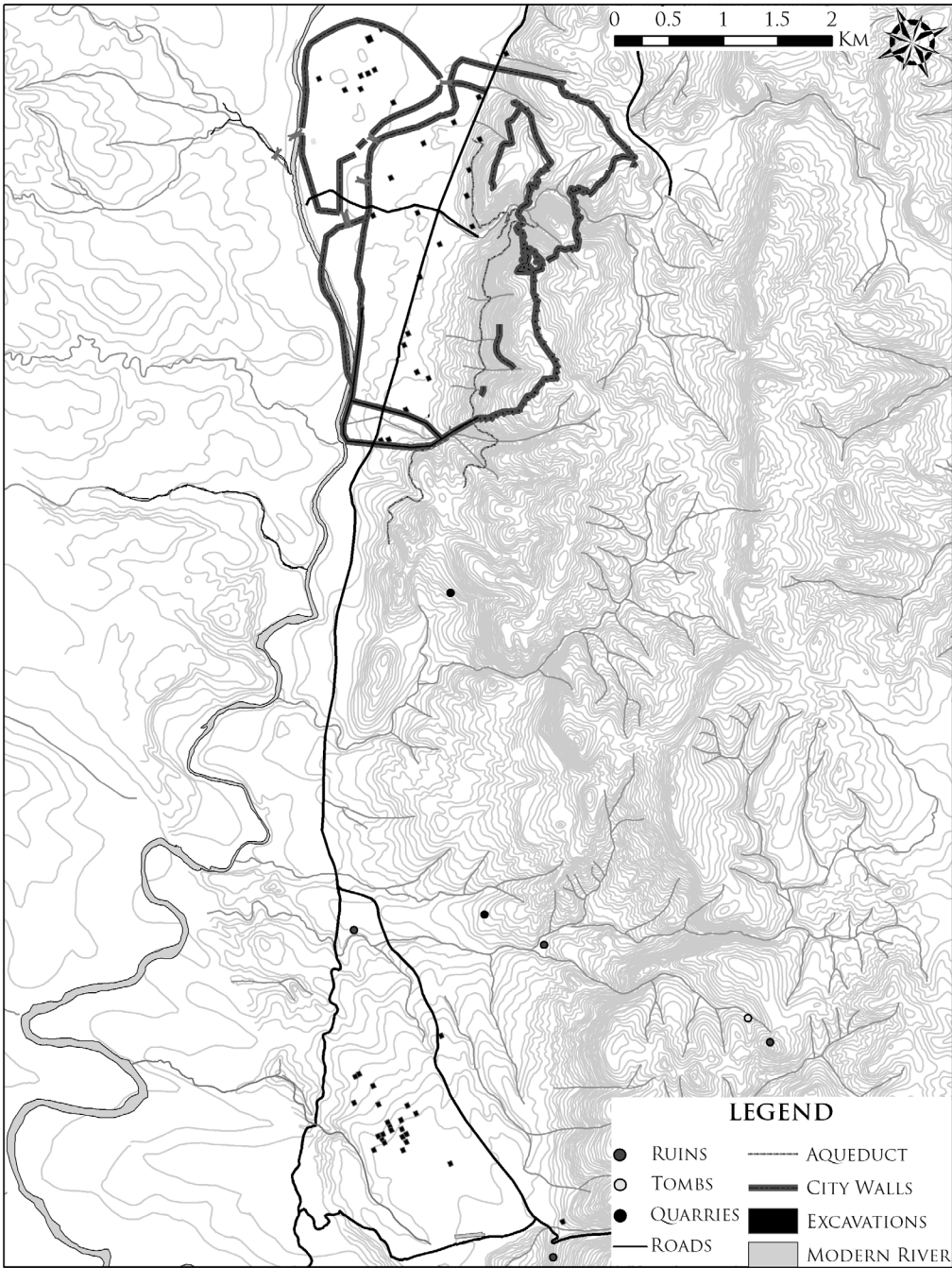
Thus, a long tradition of foundation myths, titles, and conflicting memories framed the establishment of the sanctuary of Apollo, and put Daphne on the map of the ancient world.¹⁰¹ Allegedly built in the vicinity of the Castalia spring and paired with a temple dedicated to Artemis, the sanctuary of Apollo owed its renown to the oracle, which by all accounts drew visitors from all walks of life.¹⁰² Kings and emperors, in particular, paid their respects to the god while seeking his advice. The décor of the town was greatly beautified by the munificence of rulers: Hadrian and Diocletian, for example, spared no effort in leaving their imprint on Daphne's built environment. Throngs of visitors in all likelihood visited the sanctuary every year: one can conjure up the flow of pilgrims leaving Antioch's southern gate and ascending to the great sanctuary, or alternatively, approaching Daphne from south, along the Laodicea road. Of interest, however, is the account of Apollonius of Tyana's visit and his rebuking of the local religious etiquette, or rather the lack of it. At a much later time Julian the Apostate made the same argument in even more derogatory terms.¹⁰³ All the same, the design of the sanctuary and its layout cannot be conjectured. Libanius provides us with a description of the colossal statue of the god by Bryaxis, which replicated in size that of the Zeus in Olympia and apparently embellished the rear of the temple cella.¹⁰⁴

Much more momentous events occurred in the fourth century CE, when Antioch's religious divisions reverberated on the Daphne plateau. The burial and later removal of the body of the patriarch Babylas ordered by the emperor Julian reflect the centrality of Daphne in Antioch's religious discourse, as did the blaze that later incinerated the sanctuary.

Archaeologically, Daphne is virtually unknown (Figure 5.9).¹⁰⁵ Despite topographical conditions much more favorable than in Antioch, the Princeton archaeologists had a lukewarm interest in systematically investigating this suburb.

After the excavation of a small church by Downey in 1932, their explorations in Daphne essentially followed the advice of farmers, the local *mukhtar*, or whoever had chanced upon ancient mosaics in the environs of Harbiye. Not surprisingly, the baksheesh system led to a hundred potential sites to explore and a good amount of unwanted soliciting. Thus, for the sake of expediency, an ad hoc mosaic crew charged with the task of lifting pavements was entrusted in handling most of the excavations. Their *modus operandi*, however, was certainly frowned upon by some, for a contrite apology penned by Campbell appeared in his diary as early as the summer of 1934. He remarks on the excavation methodology in Daphne:

"We made a point of continuing the work at Daphne, since our continual presence there, we hoped, would have the effect of preventing the peasants from destroying the mosaics they happen upon, with no notification to the antiquities-service nor to us. One may consider it the rule that barring the intervention of such authorities, a



5.9. Antioch, Daphne, and the 1930s excavation on the plateau of Harbiye

mosaic found is a mosaic lost. I therefore did not hesitate to conduct sondages of limited extent wherever the peasants informed us of mosaics. In spite of the accessory and sporadic nature of such researches (which occupied our mosaicist

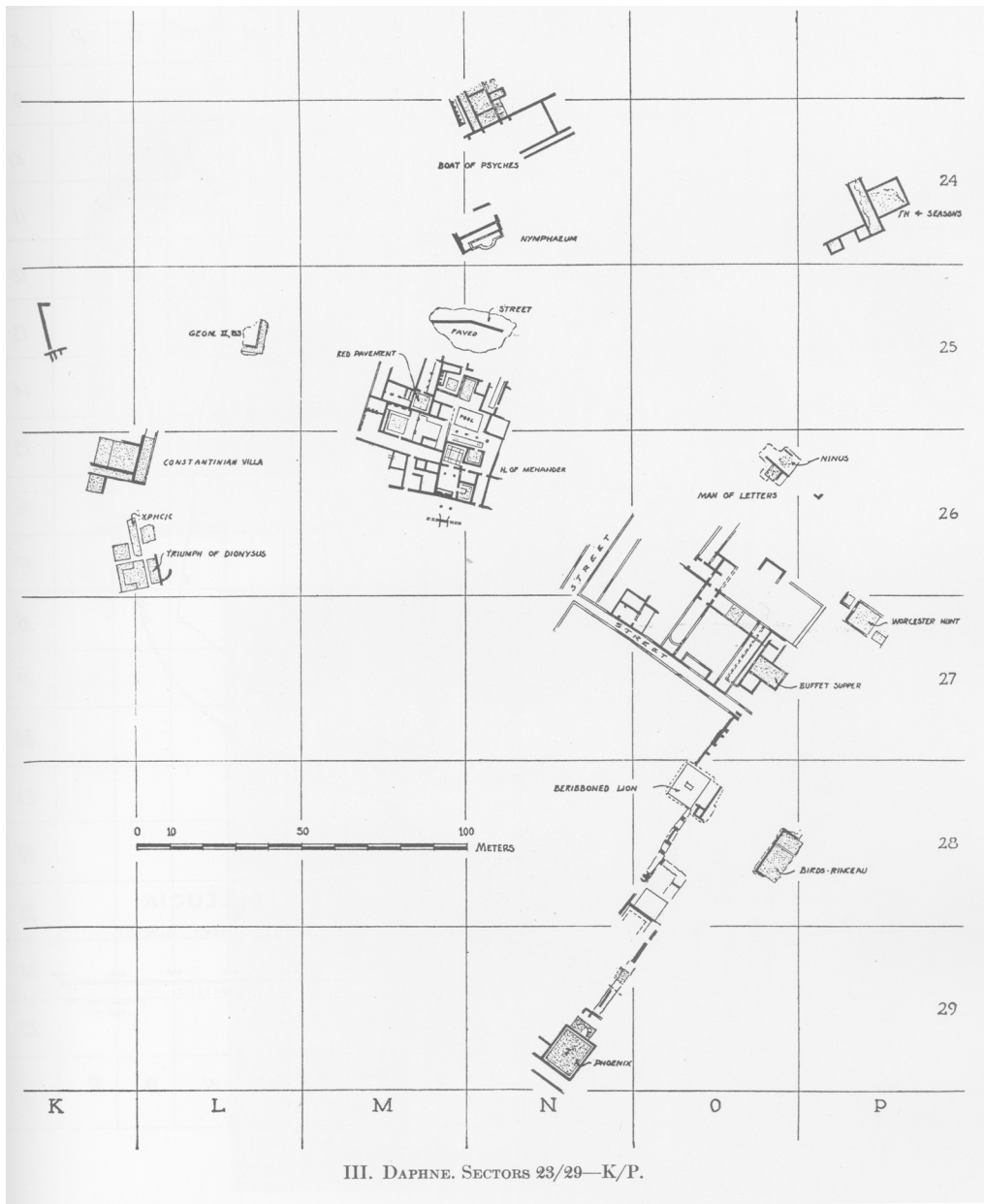
*William Gad for two months at Daphne), the results sufficed to justify the system. Every precaution was taken to note carefully the mosaics found on our maps, against a more extensive exploration of one or another of these sites.”*¹⁰⁶

The rescue of mosaics in danger was going to become a mantra in the years to come: arguably, these findings were keeping the mission afloat.

Nevertheless, this pragmatic approach accounted for intermittent excavations and deployment at a furious pace of the mosaic crew at Daphne between 1932 and 1938. After cursory inspection of a church, the theater, and several houses it was the general opinion that the Committee had fulfilled its obligations by saving the mosaics which were threatened by destruction. From that point on, Antioch and Seleucia Pieria were going to be their only targets of the Excavation Committee. How the story ended does not need repeating.

But it is also apparent from the expedition's records that a basic, yet viable topography of Daphne had been teased out by means of the autopsy of pipelines and water distribution systems that supplied sectors of the plateau away from the springs, and the presence of a central thoroughfare bisecting the town. By this model, at the center of the plateau lay the great sanctuary (and later, the Olympieion), in an area where two water channels bifurcated and a number of broken, conspicuous marble columns were noted. This sector of the town may have served as the pivotal point around which the rest of the settlement developed from the Seleucid period onward. Beyond this area, near the northern fringes of the town lay clusters of houses, many of which utilized former quarries as footings and were served by the same pipelines radiating from the springs.¹⁰⁷ It is tempting to associate these quarries with the early activities on the plateau, perhaps in connection with the construction of the temple of Apollo in the Seleucid era. The presence of fourth-third centuries BCE ceramics in the interface between the quarry strata and the houses of the imperial period strengthens this possibility, and may cast a thin light onto Daphne's early building programs.¹⁰⁸ Again, the busy lifting of the mosaics hinders the development of this picture of settlement and its evolution. Nor have recent excavations at Daphne rectified this approach: a recent discovery of a remarkable Menander pavement shows once again the shortcoming of an exclusively visual approach.¹⁰⁹

The limited cumulative evidence available then showcases discrete living units loosely arranged with no apparent orientation in the northern sector of Daphne. The main thoroughfare and a secondary road (and courtyard) identified in sectors DH 23/9 K/P and DH 25 M/N weren't sufficient to provide a coherent system of spatial organization within the site (Figure 5. 10).¹¹⁰ To the disquiet of the excavators, no tangible grid-system or modules could be safely identified on the ground, but that once again may be because of the limited evidence available. In general, the houses date to the third and fifth centuries CE. Most of their decoration can be dated – thanks to the monumental study



5.10. The Princeton excavations at Daphne: houses and other features recovered

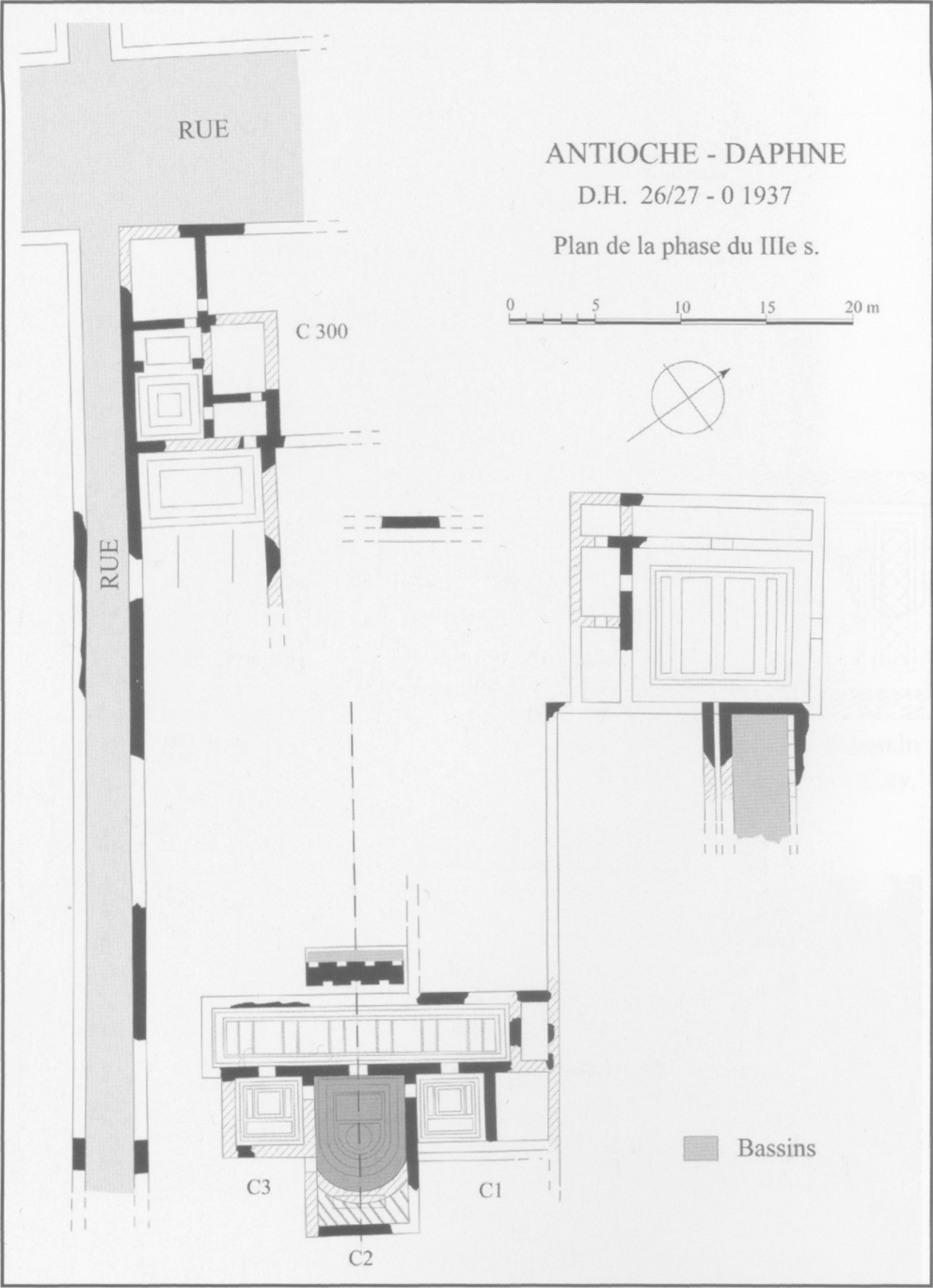
of Doro Levi – and thus inserted in a precise cultural horizon. Less easy to pinpoint is the architectural design; more often than not rooms and walls fuse in apparently complicated solutions with no visible axis. For all its limits, however, the evidence of these houses and their architectural evolution during the fourth and fifth centuries may be studied in the wider context of the new

forms of land exploitation systems in the Amuq Plain, with landed resources increasingly falling in the hands of a new imperial aristocracy, and ultimately new wealth presumably concentrating in Daphne.

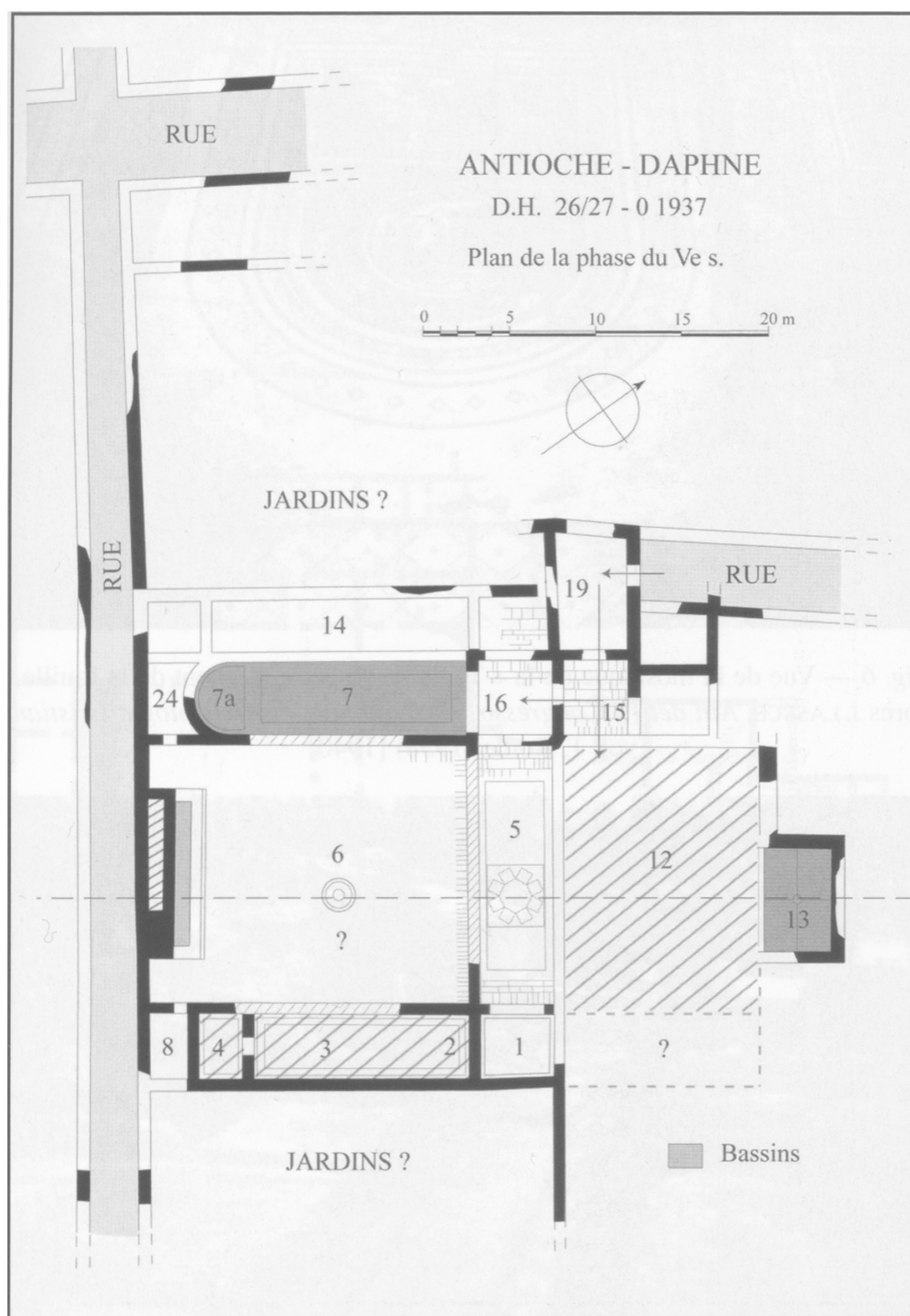
The so-called early third century *House of Menander* and its structural modifications are a good case in point (Figure 5.10). Originally, it opened on a porticoed road and consisted of three different, juxtaposed suites that may have been in simultaneous use. Here, in a bundle of intersecting sight lines, the relationship between *triclinia* and the fountains created multiple directions and foci. Unfortunately, doorways and boundaries among them can only be guessed at, much in a way that is reminiscent of Zeugma's "Zone A" and what may seem one of the most outstanding domestic contexts remains only partially understood.¹¹¹ In his study of the building, John Dobbins went so far as to suggest that it may have operated as some sort of a dining club.¹¹² While all speculations are possible, we should rather focus on the solutions adopted by the builders of the *House of Menander*. Their redesigning of well-known building schemes reflects both the freedom with which an architectural repertoire was modified in a blend of western and eastern traditions and to the variety of social groups that populated the city. The same spirit that shaped Antioch's built environment and the unique relationship between the people and their surroundings may be seen at work in the apparently eclectic designing of these examples of domestic architecture. Yet as with the *House of the Buffet Supper*, this unit presumably between the fourth and fifth centuries CE century underwent reconfiguration. Here the insertion of a pool with the submerging of a sizable portion of the so-called Suite 2 altered the relational aspects between the two suites that constituted the original nucleus of the house. Through this expedient, the builders succeeded in widening space and making the pool the centerpiece of the house. Originally intended as a screen for an adjacent triclinium, the portico now framed the south side of the pool, with rooms 2 and 11 oriented on the colonnaded corridor.

It should be borne in mind that this house is not alone in displaying drastic formal changes over time. Laying on Hellenistic foundations the *House of the Buffet Supper* offers a vivid example of the transformative qualities of these living units, and the builders' ability to fuse a variety of structural idioms:¹¹³ the third century phase of this house included the staple elements of most Antiochene houses, to wit, the dining hall opening onto a portico and fountain. At variance with the local trends, however, this unit also contained internal gardens that may be reminiscent of the planted peristyle of Italian tradition and may have been present in earlier phases of the house (Figure 5.11).

The House has been traditionally studied as two entities divorced from one another (lower and upper levels).¹¹⁴ The truth of the matter is that this Severan building, characterized by a most peculiar sequence of two triclinia flanking one large triclinium with apse opening onto a portico and nymphaeum, was



5.11A/B. House of the Buffet Supper (Morvillez 2004)



literally superseded in the fourth/fifth centuries by a new habitation scheme that completely severed its ties with the past. In particular, the “upper level” phase of the house had its pivotal point in a new marble-paved rectangular court framed by porticoes, with rooms and a long hall with apse that opened onto it up on it. Also, a new façade and gardens articulated new itineraries and visual axes among the components, and more subtly, bear witness to a general process of revamping that perhaps we can extend to most of Daphne’s built environment as we know it. Even adjacent roads were not spared in this process, as it appears that their width was greatly reduced, with private buildings taking the upper hand in the new plan. As Morvillez aptly writes: “the third century inhabitant would have certainly not recognized the metamorphosis that occurred two centuries later.”¹¹⁵ Altogether, this reconfiguration was not mere parting with architectural models of the past, as the frequent disappearance of the triclinium-portico-nymphaeum scheme may lead us to believe.¹¹⁶ Rather, this scant evidence hints at the percolating of an innovative type of house, one that within a few generations was to produce the grandiose mid-fifth century villa at Yakto (Camus Ayna). Yakto lies 3 km northwest of the springs, and here in 1933 the Princeton team investigated a multi-phase complex which included a late second century CE triclinium and a substantial re-development in the fourth-fifth centuries CE.¹¹⁷ This suburban domus, with its galleries divorcing private space from public, viridarium, bath, and the presence of grand halls such as a great *epicaustorium* and the cruciform hall, makes manifest the ideology of its patrons, folks who envisioned their domestic space as a locus of private matters, public events, and ultimately their work-space. The house at Yakto, too, obliterated a unit of the third century CE¹¹⁸ and grew as a combination of four different units, connected, however, by the two prominent porticoed galleries. These invited movement and were essential in opening up multiple focal points. In these terms, the concept of the Antiochene domestic unit as defined by its modules of the third century was thus supplanted by a new elaboration of space that reconciled the obligations of public life and the advantages of the suburban setting. The causes that prompted these modifications, and more subtly, the adoption of a new logic of domestic working environment that was imbued with the energy of public and private activities and projected the culture of the city in the suburban setting, however, may be sought outside of Daphne. That perhaps the nouveaux riches, honorati and imperial officials at large who may have seized the economic opportunities offered by the Antioch’s territory now were keen on surrounding themselves with these new domestic amenities is a cogent possibility.

Limited though the archaeological record may seem, we should turn to the Yakto villa and its visual decor once again to capture a powerful glimpse of life in Daphne. The famous *Megalopsychia* mosaic, which dates to the second half

of the fifth century CE offers an eclectic combination of visual idioms.¹¹⁹ The central hunt scene coheres with the genre of late antique *venationes*, known from a number of formally similar representations from Syria, North Africa, and the Roman west.¹²⁰ Its rectangular space is dominated by a central medallion with the personified *Megalopsychia* (Generosity); around it is a pattern of animals and hunters, against a white background interspersed with trees of various kinds. The topographical framework was already brought into focus in Chapter 2;¹²¹ yet, it should be underscored that a few of the monuments that it includes can be assigned to Daphne with certainty. Two springs and the Olimpieion leave no doubts as to their whereabouts. The mosaic presents a sequence of vignettes each populated by passersby and travelers who stroll around the city, occasionally stopping in front of workshops and houses. All in all, this picture captures a brief moment in the millenarian history of the city and brings to life its complicated textual and archaeological repertoires.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PEOPLE OF ANTIOCH

I have surveyed Antioch's territory and illustrated its physical extent, settlement, evolution, and ties that bound town and country; through the archaeological record I have populated areas that have long been deemed devoid of occupation. Chapter 5, in particular, has shown a district that, though retaining institutional independence, was *de facto* incorporated within the perceived territory of Antioch. Libanius, in particular, made this concept particularly clear when dismissing Seleucia Pieria's many centuries of history: the city was "our port."¹ My main concern is how this perspective was ingrained in the Antiochene mentality and how it pervasively shaped the actions of the local actors across the swaths of territory investigated. It is therefore apt to turn our attention to the villagers and city folks who inhabited and labored in this district. The purpose of the analysis is two-fold: first, it aims at charting the character of the Antiochene identity, probing its cultural underpinnings and visual expressions. It investigates its Hellenic core and mutable character, implicated as it was with recursive ecological, political, and military realities of the region. Second, it addresses an essential question: did the self-consciousness that cemented Antioch's built environment extend to its villages and shape a communal vision and sense of belonging within the territory? Did the Antiochenes view themselves any differently from the folks who lived say in Apamea and Cyrrhus, with whom they shared comparable ancestry and settlement outcomes?

I LEGENDS, MYTHS, AND THE FICKLE ANTIOCHENES

Admittedly, the concept of “identity” is convoluted by definition,² swayed as it is by its abstract character and all-embracing aspirations. Furthermore, when applied to the study of the ancient world, the notion of identity gets even more problematic because of its frail foundations and conflation with the even more encompassing, and indeed contentious, term “ethnicity.”³ The scholarly debate over the contribution of material culture and textual records to this discourse has stimulated a vibrant discussion among historians for the past decades;⁴ it is accepted, however, that each of these domains alone afford limited insights into the qualities of individuals and social groups in antiquity. In particular, the evidence of the archaeological record and spatial analysis cannot answer questions about a social group’s outlook and its positioning in relation to past and contemporary societies.⁵ Better dividends can be clinched as one links the archaeological data to repertoires of myths, founding legends, and shared narratives.⁶ As shown, Antioch had no shortage of mythological genealogies and claims to royal dignity, many of which have relevance in determining a corporate orientation and its values. No matter how cosmopolitan and multi-faceted in its conglomerate of constituencies, Antioch conveyed a cohesive vision of history to its affiliates.

No Greek city was ever exempt from fabricating its own genealogy, dropping names, and establishing ties with improbable heroes and illustrious commanders. Antioch had its fair share of guilt, too. It must have taken Libanius a heady effort of rhetoric when in AD 356 – as he read the *Antiochikos* during the city’s Olympic games – he sought to persuade his audience that Alexander the Great had foreshadowed the Seleucid foundation of Antioch. Perhaps the successive paragraphs narrating the deeds of Seleukos and his gangs of Athenians, Cretans, and Argives had a better appeal and relevance to Antiochenes and visitors alike, and for a good reason, as we shall see. It is not surprising that in AD 438 the Athenian empress Eudocia articulated her encomium of Antioch tapping into this same rhetoric of Greek founders: “Of your race and blood I am proud to be,” she boasted.⁷ These foundation myths served a dual purpose. First, they declared the prestige of the city, its Greek credentials, and ultimately bolstered claims of primacy. Second, they celebrated a distant past while also cementing a common civic memory, as Catherine Saliou noted.⁸ But this was a past that had broad, concrete ramifications in the *here and now* of the city; monuments, buildings, and images, whether at Antioch’s crossroads or hanging on city-gates, offered the most powerful visual corollary to these myths, and, more importantly, instilled a sense of unity in the local groups.

There is no need to reiterate the role played by the Seleucid founders in providing this region with the institutional, religious, and economic

foundations that lingered for centuries. It is nevertheless important to remember that the visual and textual rhetoric of Seleukos' foundation defined the built environment of Antioch for centuries to come. In the Middle Ages an anonymous Arab description presented the city, albeit with a good degree of liberties, as an artifact fabricated by the line of Greek kings who descended from Antiochos.⁹ The vagaries of this text need not concern us here; it is the survival of the myth of the Greek city in the Islamic era that acquires particular poignancy.

But let us turn once again to the city and take a closer look at its constituency.

We must be wary of modern labels and simplifications often applied to the people of Antioch in general:¹⁰ the fickle and the frivolous, dissolute folks with a bent for games and obscene festivals.¹¹ The survey of the ancient sources makes it possible to observe a wide spectrum of viewpoints with regard to Antioch, long before the fourth century CE. Indeed, some of these descriptions were colored by the somewhat rooted cliché of Antioch as the city fraught with amenities whose inhabitants had a penchant for exuberant, Sybarite customs. Cato the Younger's high-handed treatment of the city – as reported by Plutarch – and Tacitus' well-known remarks about the lure of Antioch, detrimental to the integrity of the Roman legions, are particularly telling.¹² Indeed Tacitus tapped into a popular rhetoric; Juvenal's sharp jab at Syrians¹³ – swelling and corroding the integrity of Rome,¹⁴ through the metaphor of the Orontes flowing into the Tiber may indeed refer to a repository of anecdotes on Antioch, its decadence, and corrupt Greek.

The alleged exuberance of the community needs also to be reconsidered. The local enthusiasm for theaters, spectacles and races reached unprecedented heights during the fourth century CE, with an array of buildings that catered to every palate.¹⁵ The archaeological evidence of two Hippodromes on the Island, a theater on the slope of Mt. Silpius and, lastly, of another theater at Daphne (plausibly near a missing Olympieion) provides a monumental support for the textual sources. That Antiochenes – in harmony with most cities of the Greek East – avidly attended these venues should not surprise us. But here more than anywhere else the community would coalesce regardless of ethnicity, status, and religion. Just as easily, these spaces could trigger riots among Antioch's constituencies.¹⁶

Nor were the Antiochenes such sophisticated urbanites imbued with letters and figurative arts as to justify parallels with Hapsburgic Vienna or Paris.¹⁷ The 2,000 seminal exhibit "Antioch, the Lost City" in celebrating the city and its legacy indeed emphasized the city's high culture, yet toned down the realities of a community that, as Peter Brown put it, was substantially "unruly and divided," and endowed with an extraordinary ability to ignite civil strife.¹⁸ All the same, the stunning selection of artifacts, re-united for the first

time since the 1930s excavations, were essential to assess the city's complicated archaeological record and to infuse much needed stamina in the realm of Antiochene studies.

Above and beyond these characterizations, my analysis is based on the assumption that Antioch's city walls didn't separate town and country. Instead, they channeled movement and invited the coalescing of a variety of linguistic, ethnic, and religious traditions. The Aleppo gate to the north and the Daphne gate to the south were pivotal points that orchestrated the daily routine of thousands of individuals commuting to and from Antioch, and whose motion produced crosspollination between the city and its hinterlands. Farmers, soldiers, pilgrims, market-goers: these were but some of the individuals who cemented the relationship between the city and its rural enclaves. But this is not all, for it should be reiterated that Antioch's main thoroughfare not only served the city but also an entire sector of northern Syria, linking, as described previously, the main cities in the region, as befitted a provincial capital.¹⁹ Overall, no textual allusion to the two gates, no matter how succinct, fails to convey the incessant hustle-bustle of people moving to and from the city.

By this reasoning, the long-held tenet by which the Greek East can be divided into Hellenized urbanites residing in cities and imbued with philosophy and rhetoric on the one hand, and peasants of Semitic descent, populating the vast expanses of rural Syria on the other falls short at resolving the multi-layered universe that was Antioch.²⁰ For too long modern scholarship has insisted on modeling the demographics of Antioch based on the views of Libanius and John Chrysostom, whose textual cityscapes glossed over the blend of cultures that the city and its hinterlands operated.²¹ I need not dwell on how these remarks on Antioch's alleged high culture were couched in intellectual postures and colored by the aspirations of the two eminent Antiochenes. Simply put, they argued for a divide that systematically separated town and country – and their respective constituencies – as two distinct entities. “Us and them” was a common formula in the words of John Chrysostom, and indeed an all too common device to construct distinction between identities.²² He unconsciously identified two ethnic groups by referring to the distinction between cultural traits that are familiar and recognizable by a community and those that are foreign and unknown. And little did it matter that the folks from the country were brothers in Christ. Not even a common language – Greek – could apparently bridge the gulf between the two halves.

We should keep in mind, however, that these remarks were voiced from the standpoint of the intelligentsia. The powerful pastor who firmly held the helm of the Christian community in Antioch for 16 years and the rhetorician acting as broker for the city and known for petitioning the emperors of the late fourth century styled the folks of Antioch according to their personal attitudes. More importantly, the utopia of recasting Antioch respectively as new Athens and as

exemplary Christian capital was the key concern in their discourses.²³ By these schemes, the diverse, eclectic, and cosmopolitan character that had long identified Antioch and its territory were thus reduced to a tabula rasa, and the cultural claims that can be drawn from these accounts have greatly impacted the writing of the social history of the city during late antiquity and beyond. Put simply, Hellenes and the *other* was the equation that in their view best represented Antioch's social matrix. And, in harmony with this stance, the *khora*, that is the surrounding countryside, was deemed as a foreign, detached entity where a barbarian language, that is Syriac, was spoken.²⁴ Only did medieval accounts restore a sense of lively diversity in the city, with much emphasis on the vibrant variety of languages spoken and ethnic variety.²⁵

But occasional glimpses of a reality different from that of Libanius and John Chrysostom did emerge in the textual record. A few examples are gripping: the hermit Aphraate holding court in the city drawing a multitude of listeners eager to hear his "divine oracles"; and his peer Makedonios rebuking military personnel, on the grounds of devising hardline punishment for the riot of the Statues. "Bronze can be recast" is his line of reasoning, an argument he voices in Syriac, his native language.²⁶ These occasional vignettes of Antiochenes conversant in Syriac with monks and ascetics are not only proof of mere bilingualism, a quality of the city that we can hardly dispute. Rather, this evidence illustrates two facets of a multilayered universe coming together, by no means estranged from one another. In Antioch, individuals entered each linguistic and cultural domain without breaking barriers or declaring the wholesale adoption of a mental system over another. As shown by recent scholarship, bilingualism existed both in the cities and countryside of the Greek East, though the majority of the monolingual speakers were presumably urbanites.²⁷ And it should be emphasized that these interactions were not cut short by the fall of Antioch to Islam in the seventh century and the ensuing struggles. The bilingual funerary inscription of one Basil, a Melchite Christian and *Server of God*, written in Greek and dating to AD 999 is a succinct yet arresting example of two texts that are perfectly aligned on the stone and made to complement one another.²⁸ The Greek lines inform solely the name and capacity of Basil, whereas the Arabic section preserves the spelling out of the date of his death and a prayer for forgiveness. No document could better convey the degree of multiculturalism that characterized Antioch through its history.

This evidence also betrays the enduring legacy of a city that from the days of the Seleucid foundation consisted of a conglomerate of ethnicities and languages; the cultural divide, however, apparently coalesced in a unified outlook. Cultural upheavals and changes in the political frameworks did, indeed, occur in the course of the Roman and Byzantine periods; adjustments and constant realignment of the Antiochene identity ensued. The realization of a canal for fullers in AD 73/74 under Vespasian, here styled as "Titus Flavius,"

is a good case in point.²⁹ The inscription that commemorates the completion of the works is a gripping manifesto of civic pride, and tangentially, of the fusion of ethnicities that by the time of the Early Roman empire may have reached unprecedented heights; Persian, Greek, and Thracian names figure prominently in the civic list of *plintheia* – that is the city blocks – as each of them was responsible for the excavation of a segment canal for the fullers.³⁰ Unimpressive though it may have been, especially when compared to the great canal of Traianus completed the following year, this achievement documents the *corvée* effort that demanded the physical involvement of the community. They singlehandedly brought this massive project to completion in ways that were reminiscent of the grand waterworks of the Seleucid period, ultimately the undertakings that had shaped Antioch and indeed its precursor Seleucia on the Tigris.

We should keep in mind that from the outset Antioch had an idiosyncratic, if not unique, cosmopolitan configuration, the equilibrium of which, however, was prone to rapid, unpredictable changes, as the local Jewish community had the misfortune to experience on several occasions.³¹

Genealogies, myths, monuments and unifying events thus may have fashioned a shared cultural perspective in Antioch. The city's visual culture also affords insights into this discourse.

Although patchy and of problematic provenience, a small corpus of funerary *stelai* purchased by the Antioch Excavations in the 1930s and now at the Princeton Museum – complemented by recent acquisitions in Antakya – may indicate a way which multiple cultural viewpoints were negotiated by a unitary,

Antiochene aesthetic idiom.³² Allegedly found in the city and its environs, these reliefs inform a durable tradition that began in the last two centuries BCE and seemingly peaked in the Antonine era. Primarily used as *loculus* lids, they consist of low relief, thin marble slabs that depict standing and reclining figures. At the bottom is typically a succinct inscription bidding farewell to the departed. The mid-second century BCE stele of Tryphe is perhaps the best-known example from this collection (Figure 6.1). It hails from Seleucia in Pieria and features a startling rendition of the deceased as the Tyche of Antioch by Eutychides. She is clad in a heavy cloak, and her pose leaves no room for ambiguity; Tryphe made sure that posterity recognized her as an upholder of the spirit of Antioch.



6.1. Grave Relief of Tryphe (Princeton University Art Museum)

All in all, the repertoire of these *stelai* adheres to the formula of the funeral banquet genre, and is rich with allusions to similar visual traditions of Asia as made manifest by the representation of space, and the insertion of furniture like stools and padded *klinai*.³³ The human figures ostensibly evolve from the naturalism and depth of Tryphe to more flattened out, rigid draped bodies standing or reclining often coarsely rendered. Admittedly, this small sample hinders too far-fetched observations. Yet the framing of the images through the representation of architectural features, the unique craftsmanship, the recurrence of scenes, and reiterated usage of imported marble single out this production against the background of northern Syrian visual traditions, and may be suggestive of a local sensibility. That this small, largely imperfect body of evidence conveys an expression of a collective is nevertheless a cogent possibility.

At its very minimum this collection shows that no matter how permeable to external stimuli and traditions, the universe of Antioch was imbued with Hellenism. The multiplicity of cultural encounters, if anything, strengthened the Greek foundation of the city. The Greek pagan repertoire with its art, gods, and festivals, and later, the Greek Bible provided its constituents with the framework of a Greek city.³⁴ In particular, the rich array of Greek myths captured by mosaic pavements found around Antioch and in Daphne strengthens this conclusion. It is plain that the iconography of these mosaics more likely derives from Hellenistic models than from any theme or subject elicited by contact with the Roman world. Iphigenia in Aulis, Oceanus and Thetis, Narkissos, Dionysus: these are but some of the themes that the mosaicists selected from a vast repertoire. Yet equally prominent are river-gods, the myth of Daphne and the topography of Syria and Cilicia, in an effort to reconcile a mythical currency common to the whole Mediterranean with the specificities of Antioch's landscape. Although occasionally complicated, this visual language may not have required high culture to unravel its metaphors and allusions to the ancient viewer. The *House of Menander's* pavements are a good case in point; the canon of greatest Greek authors compiled by Aristophanes of Byzantium may not be our first guess as we gaze upon and interrogate them. Nevertheless, the ancient viewer might have recognized the subtle message negotiated by the tesserae: the selection of the finest Greek authors, against the dangers of cultural surplus. But in the end, who were the viewers who populated the streets of Antioch and inhabited the houses in Daphne? Were they the urbanites versed in rhetoric and imbued with the tenets of Greek *paideia*, a minority that figures prominently in the orations of Libanius and that hardly represents the multilayered population of Antioch? By and large, the city was inhabited by Syrians sheathed in a Greek garb,³⁵ individuals of Eastern descent and fluent in Syriac whose profile is, however, greatly glossed over by the textual sources.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that they were part of a great civic community, recognized Antioch's mythic identity and proclaimed its legacy as successor to the Macedonian and Seleucid empires.

Not even centuries of Roman administration could modify the city's identity. Antioch had no shortage of edifices commissioned by imperial agencies: building programs sponsored by emperors or local grandees, from Agrippa to Justinian, each seeking to stamp their ambition onto this cityscape, punctuated the skyline in substantial ways for centuries. Several baths, basilicae, military and institutional buildings suited to the provincial capital had long emphasized the role of Antioch as representative of Rome in the East, in particular during the middle of the fourth century CE, when residences of emperors in Antioch were more common than in Constantinople.³⁶ Yet even Diocletian's establishment of the imperial palace and Valens' successive grand plan for the realization of a potent imperial capital, epitomized by a new forum³⁷ and the re-designing of its surrounding public buildings – the Kaisarion, the Horologium, the Commodion, and the Plethrion – were, overall, ephemeral in nature. The damage caused by the 458 CE earthquake, the gradual abandonment of the Island in its aftermath, and the development of the city's southern sectors – mainly in the Kerateion area – under the Theodosian house greatly affected the impact of the imperial capital and the visual rhetoric of the Roman city. As Van Dam noted, the monumental entrance of the palace during the fifth and sixth centuries ended up laconically as a campsite for ascetics,³⁸ and no imperial *pompe* was to be seen again. The ephemeral character of the imperial veneer cannot be more apparent than when pitted against the millennial character of the city. And it is plain that these building programs hardly altered the way that the city had been traversed and experienced for centuries.³⁹ Nor were other visual reminders of *Romanitas* any more effective; set up under Tiberius and Trajan, two she-wolf statues that punctuated the skyline from the northern (Beroea) and middle (at the junction of the Parmenios with the *cardo*) gates may have been perceived as pendants to the permanent and rich repertoire of Seleucid sculptures of great kings located at key-positions in the city, as described previously.⁴⁰ The silhouette of the Seleucid statuary in all of its didactic logic may have recalled the mythical events and ideals upon which the city was established, against the volatility of the Roman *basileis*, constantly toppled over by the hand of nature and man. That these visual programs also contributed to the bolstering of the local sense of identity is quite likely, as I argue in Chapter 2. All in all, Antioch was the community that would hardly bow its head, as befitted a city that had been capital for centuries. But such unfailing and unrestrained civic spirit may have been frowned upon on numerous occasions. A coin issue of Antioch's mint under Vespasian – later formally reprised under Theodosius II – is worth considering (Figure 6.2). In it, a crouching Tyche kneels in front of the



6.2. The Aureus of Vespasian: the emperor standing in front of the kneeling Tyche

emperor, extending her right arm and gazing at his towering figure in what appears to be an open act of submission.⁴¹ That this iconography was aimed at curbing Antioch's civic pride and reminding where the powers lay is a concrete possibility.

But perhaps the provincial designation has often shrouded the evidence that time and again Antioch showed clear symptoms of discomfort with the Roman authority. The episodes of institutional downgrading under Septimius Severus and Theodosius I, in particular, attest to downright conflict with the imperial court. The riots during the Flavian Age, the city's consistent siding with imperial usurpers, the blaze that incinerated the temple of Apollo in Daphne in AD 372 during Julian's sojourn, and finally, the tax-revolt that led to a spectacular burst of iconoclasm under Theodosius I in AD 387, are but a few events that invite reconsidering the dialectic between Antioch and the imperial court, and each party's respective disposition.

More importantly we must re-think the alleged influence of the latter on the evolution of Antioch's urban space. For too long reconstructions of Antioch's built environment have been analyzed on the basis of sequences of imperial programs. It is apparent, however, that the Antiochenes perceived and shaped the city's layout and form in their own terms. The Seleucid agencies had realized a "shell" that was to remain virtually unchanged in the ages to come, regardless of the transformations of the city walls operated by Tiberius, Theodosius, and Justinian. And the people of Antioch, their movements, and their views were deeply ingrained in the boulevards and meanders of the city. It is through these subtle negotiations that this built environment bred a civic pride that apparently had no par in the Greek East. Interestingly, the traveler who entered the city from the north would be greeted by many a grave hewn in the slopes of Mt. Staurin, lining the road from Aleppo. One of these

monuments was conspicuous in its size and dissonance. It celebrated concisely the life of Aurelia Artemidora, a woman who presumably lived in the third century. She was “from the illustrious city of Alexandria,” so the austere text reads.⁴² That was the only piece of information that mattered to her kin: in the vying for cultural primacy even tombs could serve as billboards to bolster civic claims.

2 GROUP IDENTITY OUTSIDE THE CITY?

For all their topographic diversity and their generative, evolving qualities the landscapes from the Mediterranean coast to the Syrian massifs described in the previous chapters seem to have carried, as it were, an Antiochene trademark. Economic opportunism, ecological forces, religious appeal, and heavy-handed imperial interventions: these were the factors that prompted the enlargement of the city beyond its physical confines and moved its actors at considerable distances. Although different in impetus and nature, these concerted actions radiated from the capital city and left permanent marks on the territory, creating what we may call memory signatures,⁴³ features that articulated human routines and agricultural practices for centuries. Canals, farms, shrines, and roads still bear witness to the physical growth of the capital city during classical and late antiquity. In particular, diverted river branches and meandering trails that connected sites in the Amanus, trod for centuries by farmers and shepherds in their routine movements, were the markers that more than any other signaled Antioch’s physical growth from the early imperial period onward. But these modifications and their enduring impact also comprise an act of remembrance on the part of rural communities and an unconscious celebration of a distant past. As previously suggested, the prerequisite for a discussion of a group identity is necessarily the recognition of a common history;⁴⁴ any commemoration of a shared past, whether real, distorted, or fictive, cements a sense of continuity into the present and future. The span of time and space that this study analyzes brings into focus a vast array of episodes, initiatives, and responses to crises from communities that could not be more different from one another, whether ethnically or culturally, or simply because of their setting in the vastness of the Antiochene. But common traditions and a sense of place in history provided the frame of reference that contributed to the formation of what we may call an Antiochene identity.

It can be inferred that subtle but powerful traces of the Hellenistic founders pervaded the built landscape of the Amuq Valley as manifest in the settlement patterns and in the evidence of the visual culture. Put simply, the evolution of settlement in the Roman era followed the axes and ideals mapped out by the Seleucid surveyors. Toponyms, rural administrative schemes, and cults instilled for centuries an awareness of the events – real and fictional – that framed the

Seleucid foundation. For instance, the elusive site referred as τόπον Ἐλεφαντῶνα in the vicinity of Daphne was still in use as a cemetery during the sixth century CE.⁴⁵ Whether this unknown space was signaled by statuary is a possibility that we are not in the position to verify. Nevertheless, the implications of Seleucid royal iconography are apparent, as already discussed in Chapter 5.⁴⁶ Further, as seen previously the town of Meleagrum on the slopes of the Amanus Mountains still sanctioned the inviolable limits of its territory through stone markers that indicated the *oros* (the limits) of its land as late as the second century CE.⁴⁷ Other sites seemingly adhered to these same lines in defining their territories and their political/administrative apparatus. For many a Syrian village, the ancestral laws remained the most important frame of reference;⁴⁸ even the Romans had to abide by the inviolable terms of contracts that had been stipulated generations before they took possession of the Greek East. As we saw, the settlement patterns in the central Amuq plain during the Early Empire display a trend of visible continuity from the previous eras.

Furthermore, we must bring into sharper focus the factors with which these collective beliefs were enacted and translated into concrete actions. The spacing of the rural communities provided essential support to this process. The settlements were situated at distances varying from a few hundred meters of the Jabal al-ʿAkra to several kilometers or more as seen in the Amuq Plain, but always within proximity of one another, interlocked with their neighbors. Just as folks in Antioch strengthened their grounding into the city and communal identity by means of civic participation, daily jostling against one another as they milled around boulevards and squares, so did these small enclaves foster a sense of living together, and psychologically being part of the same universe. The apparently mute sherd accumulations that signal the presence of these ancient sites on the vast plain of Antioch – as elsewhere in the Amuq Valley – should not deceive us. The presence of recursive patterns in their assemblages is critical in determining usage, know-how, social connections, and ultimately chronologies. Although graphically rendered as dots on a map, they can hardly be more meaningful than when related to a mesh of causeways, canals, and paths. Together they formed the relational web that enabled not only physical connectivity among humans but also a sense of belonging.

And the Antioch era dictated the tempo of life and main events of these communities. Not only did it provide the essential chronological corollary but it also added a sense of cultural validation and uniqueness: as late as the sixth century, folks in Antioch and its environs advertised their building achievements and key moments in history utilizing a system that was at odds with the rest of northern Syria, conversely reckoning time based on the Seleucid era. The ephemeral character of Roman values and institutions in

Antioch clearly didn't apply to the prolonged application of the Caesarian time-reckoning system.

This notion of collective histories and their role in forging group identity may not find widespread agreement. In his authoritative work "The Roman Near East," Fergus Millar dwells on a remarkable inscription from Dura Europos. In the text, Aurelius Diphilianus, soldier of *Legio IV Scythica* dedicated an altar to the ancestral cult of Zeus Betylos, on behalf of the people of the folks "who lived by the Orontes."⁴⁹ The god is attested at least in one more context, seemingly under the guise of Sumbetylos, one of the three deities to whom the oil farm at Kafr Nabo (Jabal Barīša) was dedicated in the early third century CE.⁵⁰ This rather thin evidence may not be enough to pinpoint the communities to which this cult of Zeus was most sacred, nor does the etymology cast any light on the attribute "Betylos." But it does illustrate its presence in the region between the Orontes and the limestone massif, and ultimately a local bent for harking back and celebrating common, religious roots. And, in contrast to what Millar infers, this was hardly a landscape with amnesia. Even the ancient tells were ingrained in the local topography, as attested by the Hellenistic and Late Roman remains at Tell Judeidah. Sweeps of land that served as crossroads and centers of human activities for centuries before the Seleucids can't be simply dismissed as irrelevant to successive cultural developments. Also, the visual culture attests to this. In particular, the aesthetics of early first millennium BCE reliefs and orthostats, most likely drawn from sites like Zincirli, influenced the renderings of the Zeus Dolichenus reliefs found in the Kirikhan district, near the foot of the Amanus. This was no passive revamping of visual traditions that framed the lives of these communities; rather, it attests to the process of engagement with and conscious appropriation of previous traditions.

Perhaps, in order to answer the questions at issue and identify an Antiochene character as it expanded in the rural districts we must turn our attention to the city's visual record. In particular, I focus on a distinct group of mosaics that appeared in Antioch during the late third century CE; they attest to the appearance of personifications of abstract ideas and philosophical slogans. This genre remained en vogue during the following two hundred years, and signaled the design evolution of baths, triclinia, and large halls, locales that were well suited to eliciting social interaction and networking among the visitors. *Apolausis*, *Ge*, *Ananeosis*, *Aion*, *Ktisis*, *Euandria*: these are but some of the slogans that appear central in the decorative apparatus of these spaces. Their meaning is anything but obvious, and their unraveling more often than not has produced modern interpretations, whether didactic or metaphorical, that may not always be aligned with the intentions of the artist and the patron.⁵¹ Nevertheless, we find this terminology and related images useful for their ability to communicate the cultural outlook of those who commissioned these

works of art, and in particular, the values that were central in their lives. The pervasive personification of *Ktisis*, appearing among other contexts in the Constantianian Villa of the mid-fourth century CE, merits attention.⁵² While it is now understood that the significance of the name comprises the term “possession” and wealth,⁵³ it may also re-direct the viewers to the original etymology of the term, that is “foundation,” and more to the point, the original establishment of the community. In so doing, the indissoluble tie with the land and the essential role of the latter in sustaining the Antiochene community was declared by both text and image. Once again, although spelled out in metaphorical terms – at least visually – the notion of the ancient foundation of Seleukos was in the eye of the beholder, all the more so as Antioch was now placed at the center of the Roman world. And the implications were obvious, as they declared the permanent allegiance of Antioch’s people to their founders and their proclamation of identity. By bringing *Ktisis* into sharper focus we may recognize the ties with other personified ideas that appear on these magnificent pavements. Land, abundance, renewal: these were the key factors in the daily conversations and preoccupations that took place in Antioch for centuries. Just as their Seleucid heritage and Hellenic culture were so prominent in the city, they were no less paramount in the place where it mattered the most, the *khora*.

Having explored the role of ecological forces and shared history as well as their effects on the built environment of the territory of Antioch we shall now return to the questions that lie at the heart of the chapter. More to the point: was the peasantry of remote districts integrated in the Antiochene identity? Can we assume that even the *Homines Silvani* who populated remote retreats in the region of Mt. Cassius were but one facet of the Hellenism of Antioch?⁵⁴ As shown, the piecemeal character of the evidence offers vistas that, though limited, argue for the endorsing of the cultural stimuli that radiated from Antioch.

In particular, an inscription of the fourth/fifth centuries CE from Philippopolis in Thrace (Plovdiv, Bulgaria) declares Antiochene affiliation in a unique way.⁵⁵ In the text one Zenobis asserts his place of origin: he was from Larmaza, in the territory of Antioch. The site is now identified with modern Armenaz, a village ensconced in hectares of olive groves adjacent to the Jabal al-‘A’la, 10 km southeast of Qalbloze. It is not a well-known site in archaeological terms: the ancient settlement is buried by modern developments, and only scanty traces of a monumental building tentatively identified with the Monastery of Maron are visible.⁵⁶ Better known is the textual record, especially during the mediaeval period, when a handful of Arab sources provide some insights into this industrious community. Still the meager ancient epigraphic record is suggestive: Larmaza is attested as *κώμη* in an inscription from Thabraca (Tunisia), and then figures prominently – as polis – in the catalog of cities taken by the great Sassanian Sapor I during his mid-third century Syrian

campaign.⁵⁷ Whether a city or a village, Larmaza was Zenobis' hometown, a dignified place that, as it seems, did not want for visibility. But, in the order of things, that was secondary. Zenobis wanted first to be remembered by the affiliation that mattered the most to him, as a man of Antioch.

How widespread Zenobis' perspective was is hard to establish. In more general terms, the epigraphic evidence from both the western Antiochene and the Limestone Massif offers a double-edged narrative as to how settled communities reacted to the stimuli that radiated from the city. As noted by Denis Feissel,⁵⁸ in the lower Orontes Valley toponyms that appear in the hagiographies of St. Symeon and St. Martha inform a "très grec" character that had supplanted previous Aramaic denominations. But this is not all. On the left bank of the Orontes, near the modern villages of Sinanlı and Heblan, Mécérian noted significant scatters of architecture that in all likelihood had belonged to a church: interestingly, the Alpha and Omega that appear on broken lintels are always written left to right and not vice versa as on the limestone massif, thus attesting to the bent of local villagers to maintain the "purity" of their Greek, not contaminated by Syriac.⁵⁹

Indeed the villages in the southeastern Antiochene reverse this trend by displaying the adamant resistance of Aramaic and Syriac, and the presence of toponyms that betray the Semitic layer.⁶⁰ Arguably though, much as the overall epigraphic record from the region of the limestone massif comprises a vast majority of Greek texts, the local toponyms are in the main Semitic, yet often concealed under the veneer of Hellenic nomenclature, an *interpretatio graeca*, as Feissel poignantly described it.⁶¹ The aggregate epigraphic evidence illustrates a modest number of Greek inscriptions at the time of the Early Empire, with a sharp increase in during the fourth and fifth centuries,⁶² a process that went in tandem with the growth of settlement in the region as seen previously. And Semitic names with time began to dwindle in the records, replaced as it were by those of Greek matrix; transitions of this nature are also noted within the familiar nucleus.⁶³ It should be emphasized that most of these documents were associated with funerary monuments of extraordinary diversity, as for instance dystila, hypogea, stand-alone sarcophagi, that is expressions of a funerary monumentality that most likely radiated from the city.⁶⁴

That these remote districts produced new crops of Greeks is a likely possibility. The Hellenism that Antioch mediated was but one facet of a pan-Greek universe that encompassed most of the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East during classical and late antiquity. The well-known remarks by Strabo on "Greekness' presumed main criteria"⁶⁵ offer a background against which we can model the evidence hitherto discussed. Common political traditions and language were not enough to unify this multifarious universe at the time of Augustus, as the Amasian geographer contends. With the evolution of Greek traditions within the Roman framework, Antioch

proposed a form of Hellenism that fiercely colonized landscapes and promoted a unique dialog among all its constituents.⁶⁶ Aurelia Artemidora may have been at a loss with the institutions and values that regulated the life in Antioch and environs, so distant from those of her beloved Alexandria. And the Greek spoken in the city may have been wildly different from what she was familiar with, debased as it was by oriental inflections and accents. But surely she would have been amazed to see the resilience and pride that loomed so large over Antioch's skyline, extending deep into northern Syria and beyond.

CONCLUSIONS

From the days of its foundation Antioch grew to acquire a territory that covered approximately 4,000 sq. km. As the city expanded its urban canvas, broad zones of rural settlements effectively occupied exploitable portions of the valley and the highlands, to the extent that, by the fourth century CE, most of the cultivable area was under the plow. This growth, demonstrated by the doubling in size of many sites and the appearance of lower-tier towns, was also the result of resettlement and enlargement of holdings, a phenomenon caused, by both the social and ecological modifications in the plain of Antioch. Much as the environment may seem to have taken the upper hand in the narrative, I should reiterate that those who tilled the land must take center stage. Hence I placed emphasis on the men and women who shaped this region, with attention to their mobility, resilience, and ultimately competence in tapping into a variety of resources. Despite –or perhaps because of its topographic diversity – the Orontes basin, the Amuq Plain, the Amanus Mt., and the limestone massif were perceived by them as one built landscape of vast proportions. Prosaic though the *Antiochikos* may appear, the oration surely does justice to the suggestive panoramas and various ecosystems that surrounded the city¹ as well as their interwoven character. More subtly, however, it conveys the interaction between the environment and the people of Antioch, and their symbiotic relationship. Indeed, no matter how topographically diverse, even to the modern eye, these natural features may appear, they blend into one single unit: the gentle downgrading of the Amanus piedmont into the plain of



7.1. The Bab al-Hawa gate, spanning the Antioch-Boeroea highway

Antioch and the subsequent rising of the Syrian Jibāl for one travelling from west to east made this quality all the more palpable. In turn, the hand of man systematically placed markers and informed the working of the land: roads traversed the valley, and occasional monumental gateways communicated the political realities of the day. So did the now lost arch spanning the Alexandria to Issus road and the Bab al-Hawa gate on the foothills of limestone massif, channeling traffic from Antioch to Boeroea, Chalcis and beyond into the heart of Syria (Figure 7.1).

Chapter 6 investigated the main cultural identifiers of the communities that lay in the territory of Antioch, and argued that these succeeded in maintaining and nourishing a sense of identity against a normative order – that of the Roman empire – which, with integration, also brought the danger of cultural homogeneity. I have shown how a local, durable imprint resonated in the shaping of its landscape, whether it took the form of setting up the Iron Gate to curb the seasonal fury of the Parmenios, or digging networks of canals in the expanses of land between the Orontes and the Afrin rivers. Yet if, on the one hand, the limits of the arena where these practices took place have been established, questions remain about the population and the real numbers of the actors involved. Ultimately the demography of the Antioch basin is a question that is far from settled. A spate of studies has addressed the issue to no avail, and the textual sources offer only limited support.² It is a truism that Antioch at the time of Augustus was indeed one of the biggest cities of the empire. Only Rome, Alexandria, and Carthage surpassed it in size and

population, as several texts suggest. Thus, it appears plausible that city and *khora* together may well have contained a population in excess of 100,000.³ Though speculative, this figure suggests a dense demographic concentration that was matched by few other cities in the ancient world. Apamea in Syria offers a possible comparison with its estimated 117,000 inhabitants, as established by the census of 6 AD.⁴ As seen, the 10,000 *kleroi* – plots of land – that, in the words of the Emperor Julian dotted the plain of Antioch are problematic on many counts.⁵ What is more, they bedevil the understanding of land configuration in the hinterlands of Antioch: on that basis each nucleus on a plain of 1400 sq. km would have had 140 sq. m at its disposal, figures that find no support in the archaeological record of the Amuq Plain, and are at odds with the tradition of Greek land allotment (10–20 acres).⁶ Furthermore, the evidence presented in Chapter 4 makes it plain that the olive oil and wine industries as unfolded on the heights near Antioch could very well support a community of more than 500,000 individuals. Overall then it is apparent that guesswork is the only option when assessing demographic composition of the urban nucleus and the *khora* surrounding Antioch. In Chapter 6, however, I have argued that it is less difficult to discover the stimuli that led a conglomerate of social groups to populate those territories, as well as their mental disposition. Antioch was their frame of reference: the city provided them with the tools to be part of a millenary history, and in turn, their creation and incessant layering of space heightened a deeply rooted sense of belonging. In AD 260, following his successful campaigns in the West the great Sasanian king Shapur forced his captives to build a new city in the heart of Susiana. It was to be called Veh Antioch Shapur, “Better than Antioch Shapur” that is. Whether in his attempt to appropriate the urban plan of Antioch he also sought to capture the spirit of the city is a suggestive possibility.⁷

All the same, it is noteworthy that in the fourth and fifth centuries CE the names of obscure *komai* in the landscape of Antioch figured prominently on epitaphs found outside Syria. Epigraphic dossiers from Cilicia and, in particular, North Italy, illustrate the existence of villages that now, thanks to philological autopsy, can be safely assigned to the territory of Antioch. In particular, inscriptions from Aquileia, Concordia, Venice, Milan, and Florence offer a startling snapshot of scattered Syrians who, whether for business opportunities or military obligations, were transplanted to living environments that could not be more different from those of their hometowns. That some of these groups moved on account of ongoing developments in the Amuq Valley (as seen in Chapters 3 and 4) and on the limestone massif, thus indicating the point when the two regions reached their maximum capacity in terms of rural settlement, is a cogent possibility. How these clusters of thoroughly Syrian individuals abroad fared in relation to other social groups is hard to establish; the finds were sporadically brought to light during the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries.⁸ But the presence of Syrians from Antioch and Apamea was indeed a distinct feature in the western Roman world, especially during the Later Roman Empire, as noted by Sidonius Apollinaris' in his remarks about Syrian merchants and money-lenders in Ravenna.⁹ Merchants and entrepreneurs from the rural districts of Antioch and Apamea began to populate Northern Italy, especially the Adriatic regions in what appears to be a series of immigration cycles that began in the first century BCE and reached its apex during the fourth and the late fifth centuries CE.¹⁰ It should be stressed that these tightly-knit communities were more conspicuous than the frankly thin evidence may suggest. Indeed, the presence of a Syrian enclave in Milan had an impact on the religious and physical layout of the city: the fifth century CE episcopal churches of Thecla and Pelagia, in particular, forged a spiritual connection with the city on the Orontes that invites further investigation.¹¹

Overall, these scattered archaeological attestations are impressively varied: from the unknown artist who composed the remarkable third century CE mosaic of Orpheus found in Caralis (Sardagna) so replete with Antiochene accents,¹² to the gravestones that boasted the names of unknown villages on the Amuq Valley and limestone massif. Some of these succinct epitaphs simply styled the deceased generically as "Syrian," yet the indissoluble link between some of these individuals and their hometowns merits further scrutiny, as do the means by which they could retain their identity in the face of a foreign setting.

The gravestone of Aurelius Marcianus, a man who hailed from a **κώμη Φισωροῦ ὅρων Ἀντιοχείων** and presumably died at Concordia, in the Veneto region is an arresting example.¹³ Rather than adjusting to the time-reckoning system by the eponymous consuls, the text sets the passing of Marcianus in the year 433–434 of the Caesarian era, thus keeping with the practice of Antioch. The text also tenaciously declares the village's affiliation to Antioch. Although the cumulative evidence may seem to confine this epigraphic behavior to Syrians in the Italian peninsula alone, other documents from elsewhere in the Roman world corroborate this trend.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 1 “E’ abitata infin oggi Antiochia da alcune poche genti, le quali, o per quelle anticaglie, o piuttosto vivono in tuguri fatti da loro per entro agli orti di che oggi la città dentro è tutta piena, perchè di case e fabbriche antiche, fuor delle mura della città, quasi nulla resta in piedi. Presso al luogo dove noi alloggiammo mostravano i Turchi non so che, che dicevano Paulos de’ Christiani, che per ventura doveva essere qualche chiesa di San Paolo; ma era ogni cosa tanto distrutta che nè lo vidi, nè l’intesi bene. Nè essendovi altro di notevole da vedere, tre ore innanzi notte facemmo levata di nuovo”. *Pietro della Valle*, 873–874.
- 2 Through its multidisciplinary approach, landscape archaeology enables the analysis of landscapes beyond their materiality, bringing to bear ecological factors and the full breadth of cultural phenomena that survive on the surface, Alcock–Cherry 2004, 1–9. Exemplary in this sense is the study of the city of Sagalassos in southwestern Anatolia, where a robust program of geo-archaeological surveys goes in tandem with the excavation of the city’s main foci; see Vanhaverbeke–Waelkens 2003. I should also mention the case of Aphrodisias, where surveys were undertaken several decades after the beginning of excavations at the site; see Ratté–De Staebler 2012.
- 3 Horden and Purcell 2000, 93.
- 4 Wilkinson 2004, 63–64.
- 5 Sauvaget 1934.
- 6 Eger 2014b.
- 7 Brown 2003, 81.
- 8 *Theod.HR* 2.19.
- 9 Lib. *Autobiography*, 216–217.

CHAPTER I

- 1 *Antioch Archives*, Diary of 1938.
- 2 *Antioch Archives*, Correspondence of October 10–26, 1938. The two stelai are mentioned in the catalog of Zeus Dolichenus representations compiled by Pierre Merlat. He apparently attended the discovery of the finds and was granted the right to mention them by Frank Brown of Yale University. The latter was seemingly planning their publication: see Merlat 1951, 382. With regards to Kurcuoğlu Höyük, AS 55 in the AVR P gazetteer, see Yener 2005, 215 and *Braidwood, Mounds*, 25.
- 3 Yérasimos 1988, 203.
- 4 Essential to the discussion is H. Butler Crosby’s brief tour of sites in the south Eastern Amuq Valley, see *AAES* 1930. Worth mentioning, however, is his record of various buildings and religious inscriptions in the environs of ancient Imma, near modern Yeni Şehir, and on the Limestone Massif of Syria. As we shall see, this project was key to the establishment of the *Committee for the Excavation of Antioch and its Vicinity*. On a different note, in the aftermath of the Hatay’s annexation to the Republic of Turkey, R. Anık (Anık 1944) revisited most of Braidwood’s sites and added new foci that he had discovered on the coast, among which the most prominent is Kinet Höyük, currently excavated by M.H. and C. Gates. Also, Alkim 1969 must be cited as it offers an overview of Bahadır Alkim’s work in the Amuq Plain, specifically in its northern sector, where he replicated most of Braidwood’s survey, including Roman and Islamic sites situated along the Amanus’ passes.

- 5 See Woolley 1955 for the excavations conducted at Halalakh-Tell Atchana, Tabarat al-Akrad, and finally Tell esh-Sheikh.
- 6 Haines 1971. The main instigator behind the “Syrian-Hittite Expedition” of the Oriental Institute was J.H. Breasted; on top of his agenda was the search for sites pertaining to the Late Hittite kingdom of Hattina, known through various sources.
- 7 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 211.
- 8 See no.4.
- 9 This is the survey that assembled the *IGLS* epigraphic corpora.
- 10 Jacquot 1931 offers an overview of the most conspicuous monuments in the region of Antakya, compiled during the years of the French Mandate; among the buildings that he mentions are the remains of the stadium situated to the north of Antioch and the various Roman roads on which he traveled. Though valid for its documentary purposes, the publication is essentially focused on archaeological itineraries and on the amenities in the region.
- 11 Wilkinson 2003.
- 12 *Braidwood, Mounds* 1.
- 13 Yener et al. 2000, 163–165.
- 14 *Braidwood, Mounds* 6–7.
- 15 Wilkinson 2003.
- 16 *Braidwood, Mounds* 8.
- 17 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 211–226 sketches the complexity of the geoarchaeology in the region as well as the main research questions.
- 18 *Braidwood, Mounds* 9–10.
- 19 Casana 2003, 186–187.
- 20 *Braidwood, Mounds* 5.
- 21 *Antioch Archives*, Diary of June 26th, 1938.
- 22 In particular, he failed to acknowledge the accumulation of silt along the river and the fan aggradation from the Amanus Valleys. See Wilkinson 2003, 146.
- 23 The case of Tell Atchana, Alalakh (AS 136) is an instructive one; though devoid of significant Roman materials, the slopes to the NE of the ancient city present traces of Early to Late Roman wares, see Casana 2004, 106.
- 24 Liebeschuetz 1972, 69.
- 25 For the comprehensive material culture chronology, as proposed by the various Oriental Institute projects in the region, see Casana 2003.
- 26 *Braidwood, Mounds* 6. In the count of 82 sites, I did not include the mounds whose Roman occupation was referred to as “possible” or “probable” by Braidwood.
- 27 The wide circulation in the Amuq Valley of Eastern Sigillata “A” predecessors (heretofore referred as ESA) and of ESA fishplates and bowls of the early series often spill into the last decades of the first BCE and early first CE and justify the present argument. For a thorough discussion of the ESA characteristics, chronology, and distribution, along with a description of other Eastern Sigillata wares, see Hayes 1985, 1–96.
- 28 *Braidwood, Mounds* 20–37.
- 29 It is likely that Braidwood’s neglect to see a divorce between late Hellenistic materials and Early Roman also applied to the distinction between Roman and Late Roman material cultures. Unfortunately, it is hard to pinpoint Braidwood’s dating criteria. On the basis of the Braidwood’s collections that I visited in 2003 and 2005 at the Oriental Institute and at Cornell University respectively, it is likely that he based his judgment on Late Roman material culture solely on the presence of Brittle Wares, LRC, and African Red Slip. In so doing, however, he neglected to acknowledge the existence of early versions of ARS that, though not overly popular in the Amuq Valley, were present in the second century CE.
- 30 *Antioch IV.1* and Jones 1950, 149–296.
- 31 In holding onto his agenda, Braidwood neglected to mention the existence of canals, water mills, and other substantial traces of “later” occupation.
- 32 *Braidwood, Mounds* 38–39. Arability of the land is, according to Braidwood, the dominant aspect that influenced decision making in a community. In arguing that access to water resources is another fundamental factor in the location of settlement, he used the archaeological evidence of Tell Tayinat, a city that was allegedly situated at a considerable distance from the Orontes.
- 33 *Braidwood, Mounds* 40.
- 34 For textual and visual documentation of the road between Antioch and Chalcis, as well as some data pertaining to the characteristics of this important artery of traffic, see Poidebard 1929, 22–29. Also, *Tchalenko, Villages*, Pl. CLXX offers a series of images of the same road in the vicinity of Tell Aqibrin.
- 35 Yener et al. 2000, 179.
- 36 Over the course of the last ten years, the project consisted of eight seasons of survey work: 1995–1998, 2000–2002, and 2005. Two study

- seasons were undertaken in 2003 and 2004, during which the entire archaeological collection was processed; these two seasons, spent in the lab at the OI facility in Tayfür Sökmen, Hatay, were instrumental in building the chronological framework that underpins this and other thematic studies. See De Giorgi 2007.
- 37 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 211–226.
- 38 Yener et al. 2000, 180.
- 39 Wilkinson 2002.
- 40 Wilkinson 2003.
- 41 Casana 2003, 194.
- 42 Yener 2000, 179.
- 43 *Antioch Archives*, “Notes on the Staff.”
- 44 On the basis of the aggregate archaeological evidence, Tchalenko maintained that settlement in the region of the limestone hills ceased in the seventh century CE. Tate, however, after restudying some of the sites argued that these villages were thriving at least until the ninth century, and probably beyond that point: Tate 1992. For a comprehensive discussion of this problem and the ramifications on the economy of the region, see Decker 2001, 69–86. Also, see Chapter 4 for the reprise of the discussion.
- 45 *Tchalenko, Villages III*.
- 46 Tate 1997, 55–97.
- 47 The work by Peña, Castellana and Fernández has partially filled this lacuna. Although general in nature, their documentation of sites in the Jabal al-‘A’la, Barīša, and Wastāni has brought to light a wealth of small, hitherto unknown sites that contribute to the picture of dense settlement in the region from the Early Roman onward. Necropoleis, shrines, and monasteries are the most recurring features in their catalogs. See Peña-Castellana-Fernández 1990, 1992, 1999.
- 48 Decker 2001, 70.
- 49 For views that substantially diverge from Tchalenko’s see Callot 1984 and Tate 1992. More fundamentally, a recent, concise study by Callot calls into question the identification of the olive presses on the Massif Calcaire. New comparative data make it now possible to establish that the installations of the fourth–sixth centuries CE were in fact designed for the production of wine. See in particular Chapter 4 and Callot 2013.
- 50 Decker 2001, 71. For a thoughtful discussion of the notion of “crises,” specifically the alleged large-scale crisis of the third century CE, see Garnsey 1988.
- 51 Liebeschuetz 1972, 71–73.
- 52 *Lib. Or.* 2. 33.
- 53 For Libanius’ modeling of himself as *nouveau* Isocrates and performing in this capacity on numerous occasions as festival orator, see the panegyrics of the Emperors Constantius, Constans, Julian, and obviously the *Antiochikos*. For more on these problems and on the historical value of Libanius’ orations and letters, see Downey 1961 and Liebeschuetz 1972, 23–39, as well as the authoritative study by Cribiore 2007. Norman 2000 is essentially a discussion of the *Antiochikos* and, as such, it offers some valuable insights on many of the problems at issue in this study.
- 54 A recent photo exhibit in Istanbul documented the activities of the Princeton Antioch excavations with much emphasis on the recovery of the pavements; see the Catalog *City of Mosaics* and Kenfield 2014, 36–77, for a succinct timeline of the expedition.
- 55 Bowersock 1994b, 411.
- 56 *Antioch V*, 3–12.
- 57 See the analysis of the *Atrium House* and its decorative apparatus in *Levi, Pavements*, 15–25. Also: Giroire 2012, 98–99; *Lost Ancient City*, 172–174.
- 58 See *Lost Ancient City* and Becker-Kondoleon 2005; the two volumes stem from “Antioch. The Lost Ancient City,” an exhibit that toured North America and that greatly contributed to renewing interest in Antioch.
- 59 *Antioch Archives*, Field Report 1932.
- 60 In a letter of October 2, 1930, Shear endorses the project, but suggests that “the permit should not be accepted until a director with the necessary qualifications has been secured and the full sum for a five year’s campaign has been subscribed.” *Antioch Archives*, Correspondence.
- 61 Moss 2003.
- 62 *AAES II*.
- 63 *Antioch Archives*, Correspondence.
- 64 For a concise description of the year-by-year operations see Najbjerg 2001, 179–181.
- 65 *Antioch I*, 107–113. The building consisted of two phases: foundation in the fourth–sixth centuries, and a major overhaul in the tenth–eleventh centuries.
- 66 *Antioch Archives*, Report of the Field Director 1938.
- 67 *Antioch V*, 12.

CHAPTER 2

- 1 Cohen 2006, 91–92. That is “Antioch near Daphne” and “Antioch by Daphne,” and “Antioch on the Orontes.”
- 2 Jacob 2006, 237.
- 3 See n.13.
- 4 *I.Ephesos*, 1308.
- 5 Eus. *Vita Const.* 3.5
- 6 Jul. *Mis.* 348 B. Ἀντιόχῳ μὲνδὴ ταῦτα ἐποιήθη. τοῖς δ’ ἀπ’ ἐκείνου γενομένοις οὐ νέμεσις ζηλοῦν τὸν οἰκιστὴν ἢ τὸν ἐπόνυμον (translated by W. C. Wright).
- 7 Bowersock 1978, 94–105.
- 8 Amm. Marc. 22.14.4–5, Jul. *Mis.* 361, Lib. 11.116, *Malalas*, 8.12–13. For a comprehensive survey of Antioch’s myths see *Downey, History* 49–53. Noteworthy, however, is Saliou 1999–2000, in which she explores the mythographic discourse in Libanius’ *Oration* 11, also known as “Antiochikos.”
- 9 *Synkellos, Chron.* 146.
- 10 Str. 16, 2, 5.
- 11 *Malalas*, 8.20.
- 12 Lib. 11. 72–76.
- 13 App. *Syr.* 57; a modern analysis is in Grainger 1990, 66–87. Whether the foundation of all of these cities can be attributed to Seleukos Nikator alone is an argument that, because of the lack of textual sources, can hardly be challenged; at any rate it seems likely that Appian exaggerates his importance, not reckoning with Antiochus I and his successors’ urbanizing plans. To wit, Appian attributes to Seleukos sixteen cities bearing the name of “Antioch” five “Laodikeia,” nine “Seleucia,” three “Apamea,” and one Stratonikeia. Of all of these, he accords the greatest prominence to Seleucia on the Tigris and Seleucia in Pieira.
- 14 App. *Syr.* 58.
- 15 The account of Strabo on the *Tetrapolis* (16.2.4–10) seemingly draws on that of Poseidonius of Apamea: see Primo 2009, 163–167 and Seyrig 1970, 290–311. As for the archaeology of the four cities Apamea is well known, thanks to decades of extensive excavations and a rich publications record directed for many years by Jean Charles Balty: see for instance Balty 1994. Less so are Laodikeia and Seleucia Pieria. The former was investigated by Sauvaget in the 1930s; though imbued with colonial overtones, his account bears witness to the ancient city before the heavy urbanization of the Syrian coast (Sauvaget 1934, 81–114). For the antiquities of Seleucia Pieria, see Chapter 5.
- 16 Archi et al. 1971; Algaze et al. 1994.
- 17 Cohen 2006, 24. As for Demetrios Poliorketes’ laying waste of Cilicia and sudden crossing of the Amanus Mt. and advancing in the Cyrrhessite, thus deep in Seleucid territory see Plu. *Demetr.* 47–51.
- 18 Unpublished. Princeton Marquand Library Inventory record # 3182. Currently being studied by Jacob Lauinger, who kindly shared his preliminary impressions with the writer.
- 19 *Downey, History* 46–53.
- 20 Woolley 1955.
- 21 Harrison 2014, 396–425.
- 22 Kraeling 1932, 131.
- 23 On Al Mina the bibliography is vast; see in particular Woolley 1938, Boardman 1965 and 1990. The topic will be taken up in Chapter 5 inasmuch it has bearings on the relationship between Antioch on the Orontes and Seleucia Pieria.
- 24 Lib. *Or.* 11.86–93 and *Malalas* 8.13–15 are of course the two main authorities with regards to the city’s foundation. Both accounts agree on the central event of Seleukos’ sacrifice: the prodigy of the eagle carrying the sacrificial meat to the site of the altar of Zeus Bottios. Libanius, however, emphasizes that the altar had been previously set up by Alexander himself, thus reinforcing the notion of Seleukos true heir of the king. As for the *Malalas* account, of particular interest is the allusion to Seleukos’ anxieties in finding a suitable area for the site, fearing the dangers of runoff from Mt. Silpius (8.13). In general, the topic of Antioch’s foundation has been treated by an impressive volume of scholarship; I re-direct the reader to the collection of primary and secondary sources in Cohen 2006, 84–88. With reference to the name “Antiochia” see Jus. 15.4.7–8; Tz. *Chiliades* 7.167. The *Suda* offers another possibility, suggesting that Antiochos, the son of Seleukos is the honoree; *Suid.* A, 2692. For a comprehensive treatment of the issue see Pagliara 2003, 149–155.
- 25 Will 1997, 101–106.
- 26 Brands 2008, 9–20, on the palimpsest of repairs and adaptations that the Iron Gate incorporated from the second century CE to the Islamic age.
- 27 Paus. 8. 29, 3; *Malalas* 8.13.
- 28 Le Strange 1965, 59.

- 29 Nonn. *D.* 17, 262–314. Opp. *Cyn.* 2, 120. See also Hollis 1994, 163.
- 30 On the inscription that commemorates the military canalization of the *Dipotamiae Flumen* see Van Berchem 1983, 183–196. For the broader ramifications of this document see Van Berchem 1985, 47–87, and especially Feissel 1985, 77–103 which instead focuses on a almost synchronic canalization project commissioned by the city. As for the navigability of the Orontes, and the works commissioned by an unknown Roman emperor see Paus. 29. 3–4; Millar 1993, 86.
- 31 Mécérian 1964, Djobadze 1986. See Chapter 5.
- 32 Sid. Apoll. *Pan. Anthemius*, 93. On Norias, see De Miranda 2007, 279–311
- 33 Norias were vertical waterwheels typical of the riverine landscape of the Orontes, with great concentration in Hama and Antioch. They were popular in the Roman world both East and West, attested as they are at Apamea and Ostia. They, however, reached their maximum dissemination during the Islamic epochs. As for their mechanical aspect, Norias were driven by the current of the river from which they lifted water, and consisted of a vertical wheel attached to a gear that would set in motion a horizontal wheel. Other than serving industrial purposes, they were a locus of social interaction, see McQuitty 2004, 261. As for the output rates of these devices, see Horden-Purcell 2000, 239–243.
- 34 Wilkinson 2003, 147. For a modern study of the Orontes basin and its cultural implications, see *Computational Research on the Near East*, also known as CRANE Project; www.crane.utoronto.ca
- 35 Weulersse 1940. In the 1930's, Weulersse took measurements of the river levels using three stations along its course. His project succeeded in demonstrating the Orontes' unpredictable behavior and its susceptibility to sudden, abrupt flow changes in response to rainfall increase, especially upstream in the territory that now corresponds to modern Syria.
- 36 McAlee, *Coins* 529 and ff.
- 37 See Chapter 6 for the discussion of Antioch's engagement in the Roman world.
- 38 For the publication of the capital, see Seyrig 1940, 339–344; on the identification of the site Cohen 2006, 86.
- 39 Seyrig 1940, 342–343. It is worth noting that Wolfgang Leschhorn offers a slightly different reading of the scene, as he posits that the scene could reasonably represent the foundation myth of another city of the *Tetrapolis* –possibly Laodikeia, see Leschhorn 1991, 445. Yet Laodikeia's version of the myth, with the centrality of the wild boar and its killing by Seleukos, departs significantly from the original template. In this context, the Tyche holding the Apollo figurine seems like a decisive element in assigning the scene to Antioch.
- 40 Downey, *History*, 67.
- 41 Str. 16.2.5; Tac. *Ann.* 6.42.
- 42 Plin. *NH.* 6.122.
- 43 Luc. *Phars.* 6.50.
- 44 Detroit Institute of Arts, Accession no. 40.127. Published in *Levi, Pavements* 58. On personified rivers in the visual culture of Antioch: Huskinson 2005, 247–264.
- 45 The Italian excavations of Seleucia on the Tigris operated on and off between 1968 and 1984. Their scientific output is vast especially with regards to glyptic, bullae, and Seleucid/Parthian visual culture at large; among these studies, however, particularly noteworthy are: Gullini 1967, Invernizzi 1991 and Messina 2010, which features the up-to-date list of publications that stem from the project. Indeed less prolific in terms of divulgation, but by no means less important were the American excavations carried out under the auspices of the Kelsey, Toledo, and Cleveland Museums. See Hopkins 1972.
- 46 Str. 16.9.
- 47 *BCHP* 10 (Seleucid Accession Chronicle 10).
- 48 Plin. *HN.* 6.30.5–6.
- 49 Messina 2010, 16–18.
- 50 Hopkins 1972, 3.
- 51 App. *Syr* 58.
- 52 Tac. *Ann.* 11.8.
- 53 Hopkins 1972, 149.
- 54 Messina 2007, 106–115.
- 55 On seals and bullae: Invernizzi 1996, 131–143.
- 56 Hopkins 1972.
- 57 Jos. *Bell. Iud.* 7.54–62. The agora and the archives were allegedly destroyed by fire in AD 70.
- 58 Mc C. Adams 1965, 61; Wilkinson 2003, 86.
- 59 Mc C. Adams 1965, 119–134.
- 60 Bar Kochva 1979; Cumont 1934, 187–190.
- 61 Briant 1982, 150.
- 62 Briant 1982, 151.
- 63 On Antigoneia: D.S. 20.47.5; Lib. 11.85; *Malalas* 8.11.

- 64 Robert-Robert 1989, 81–83; Ma 2000, 360.
- 65 Lib. 11.85.
- 66 D.S. 20.47; D.C. 40.29; Lib. 11.85.
- 67 Downey, *History* 60–61.
- 68 Cohen 2006, 76–77.
- 69 Malalas 8, 201. For the discussion of *Tetrakioinia*, see Balty 2000, 227–237.
- 70 See Parlasca 1981, 7, for the Tryphe funerary relief from Seleucia in Pieria now at the Princeton Museum of Art and discussed at p. 168, Figure 6.1. Also: Shelton 1979, 30.
- 71 Plin. *HN*. 34.51. On Eutychides: Paus. 6.2.7.
- 72 Christof 2001; Meyer 2006.
- 73 McAlee, *Coins* n. 832/833.
- 74 Lib. *Ep*. 88.2; *Evagrius* 1, 16; *Theod.HE* 3.16.2.
- 75 Malalas 11.9.
- 76 Young 1996, 237.
- 77 On additional statues of Seleukos and Antiochos IV, Lib. 11.92; 11.123. For the topographical implications of this sculptural program see Saliou 2006, 82–84. It is also interesting to note that in AD 70 the emperor Titus advertized his destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in a way reminiscent of the Seleucid practice: he hanged the Cherubim on the southern gate of the wall of Tiberius (*Malalas* 10.45; *Life of St. Symeon* 126), thereafter styled as the “Cherubin Gate.” *Malalas* 11.24 on the gate serving as billboard for imperial achievements: he reports on the inscription (“stone tablet”) set up by Antoninus Pious to commemorate the paving of the main thoroughfare.
- 78 Cohen 2006, 46–47; Iossif 2010, 147–164. See also Saliou 2009, 241 for a different interpretation of the monument’s iconography; she suggests that it might celebrate the triumph of an unknown emperor, or replicate the spirit of the arch of Galerius at Thessaloniki. The latter proposition, however, is problematic, as the arch in Thessaloniki is a double Trypylon with six parallel arcades, thus structurally serving a different purpose. It spans the Via Egnatia and it did function as trait d’union between the palatial complex and the sacred area. For the description of the arch of Galerius see Verzone 2011, 183–188.
- 79 *Malalas* (13.19) locates the Tetrapylon on the Island near the *Regia*.
- 80 Amm. Marc. 22.16.7.
- 81 Str. 16, 4.2.
- 82 Agusta-Boularot 2012, 133.
- 83 *Antioch V*, 101–118.
- 84 Brands 2007; Brands-De Giorgi 2015.
- 85 Brasse 2010, 268. This contribution stems from Gunnar Brands’ survey of Antioch’s fortifications. While the systems of defenses on Mt. Silpius and Mt. Staurin were the main focus of this project, other sites were also investigated: Epiphaneia, the Iron Gate, and the ramification of aqueducts on the slopes of Mt. Silpius. For the scientific agenda and results of each of these initiatives see Brands 2007, 2009, 2010, and forthcoming. Field reports presented in the framework of the Kazı Sonuçları also document this research: Brands-Pamir, et al. 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006a, 2006b. See also Pamir 2010b, 453–461.
- 86 On the Philonauta Gate: *Malalas* 13.40. Downey, *History*, 621.
- 87 *Antioch on the Orontes* III, 2, 19.
- 88 *Antioch on the Orontes* III, 2.
- 89 Downey, *History* 71.
- 90 *Levi, Pavements* 36.
- 91 Poccardi 1994, 993–1023.
- 92 *Antioch Archives*, Summer 1934 Season.
- 93 Lib. *Or*. 11. 209–211.
- 94 Ćurčić 1993, 67–90.
- 95 Lib. *Or*. 11.155; 161.
- 96 *Antioch I*, 1–41.
- 97 Brands-De Giorgi 2015. Salvage excavations at the hippodrome and the temple were undertaken in 2013 by a Turkish team. For their preliminary report, devoid, however, of visual documentation, see Pamir 2014, 112–123 in *City of Mosaics*.
- 98 Mayer-Allen 2012, 68–80. See in particular p. 73 where the authors cautiously challenge the traditional location of the church on the Island on the basis of *Malalas* 13.3, and *Theod. HR* 5.35.5.
- 99 *Proc. Aed.* 2.6.2–5.
- 100 Str. 16.2.4; *Malalas* 8.22. For the discussion of Epiphaneia’s agora, see Downey, *History* 621–631.
- 101 Brands-Pamir et al. 2007, 410–411. For the preliminary study of this small corpus of ceramics, see Brands-Pamir et al. 2008, 407–409.
- 102 See n.56.
- 103 Personal communication by Gunnar Brands, in anticipation of the publication of his survey, forthcoming in 2016.
- 104 The earliest attestation of fortifications and gates is the glimpse in the *Gourob Papyrus*, Col. 3, 1.19–20. As for the various building programs see Str. 16.2.4 and the sources of Late Antiquity: Lib. *Or*. 11.90; *Proc. Bell.* 2.10.9;

- Malalas* 10.8; *Evagrius* 1.20. Various gates are also mentioned in the *Life of St. Simeon* 3; 9; 57; 126; 127.
- 105 Brasse 2010; Hoepfner 2004.
- 106 *Evagrius* 1.20 on how this project may have been spurred by the empress Eudocia's advocacy.
- 107 Posamentir 2008; Hild-Hellenkemper 1990, 181–182.
- 108 Brasse 2010, 267–269.
- 109 Hoepfner 2004, 5; 1999.
- 110 McNicoll 1997, 88. *Infra*, Chap.6.
- 111 For the history of Cyrrhus (Kyrros), see Cohen 2006, 181–184. On the walls: Frézouls 1977, 191, in which he notes the four sectors of early fortifications embedded in the walls of the epoch of Justinian. He assigns the polygonal masonry to the “enceinte macédonienne.” See also Van Berchem 1954, 267–270. Recent excavations were conducted at the site by a Franco-Lebanese expedition: see their report on the domestic architecture and the city walls in Massih 2009, 289–294.
- 112 Van Berchem 1954, 254–270.
- 113 Feissel 1985, 91–92.
- 114 Leblanc-Poccardi 1999, 91–126. Based on aerial photography from the 1930s and the evolution of Antakya's built environment the two French researchers were able to propose patterns in the configuration of Antioch's grid. The heavy modifications of the city from the Ottoman period onward, however, hamper a coherent reading of the evidence throughout.
- 115 For a brief report on the mosaics recovered by this excavation see Acar 2011.
- 116 On the configuration of Antioch's quarters and their names in 73–74 AD see Feissel 1985, 77–103.
- 117 *Antioch V*, 19–40.
- 118 *Antioch V*, 3–12.
- 119 Saliou 2000b.
- 120 *WSM* 924–928; Lorber-Houghton 2009–2010, 18; Iossif-Lorber 2010, 158.
- 121 *J. AJ* 16, 148; *BJ* 1, 425.
- 122 Balty 1994, 77–101; *Antioch on the Orontes V*, 140–151; Cabouret 1999, 127–150.
- 123 *Malalas* 13.4; John of Antioch, *Chr. fr.* 273.1, 21–24.
- 124 *Lib. Or.* 50. 2–3. Translated by A.F. Norman.
- 125 *Antioch I*, 114–156; *Levi, Pavements* 323–345; Lassus 1969; Poccardi 1994, 1005–1014.
- 126 Lavin 1963.
- 127 *Antioch I*, 146. See also Downey, *History* 659–664.
- 128 The controversial *Codex. Vat. Arab.* 286 of the Middle Byzantine period that narrates a story of Antioch dwells on the four talismans that protected the city from all sorts of nuisances like winds and mosquitoes. See Guidi 1897, 157.
- 129 Tate 1997, 55–71.
- 130 Alcock 1997, 103–117.
- 131 Downey, *History* 221.
- 132 As for Libanius' remarks on chariots blocking traffic see Introduction, n.9. It's interesting to note that, for all of its vagaries, *Codex. Vat. Arab.* 286 seems to deliberately counter Libanius' view arguing that “if a chariot encounters another chariot they do not run against each other” thanks to much urban space available. See Guidi 1897, 157.
- 133 *Isaac of Antioch*, 91–105. See also Alpi 2012, 150 and van Esbroeck 1996.
- 134 *Theod.HR.* 6.6.
- 135 *Hom. in Act.* 6.3.
- 136 *Lib. Or.* 2.26, 50.31, 19.6. On Libanius' varying characterization of Antioch see Cribiore 2007, 25.

CHAPTER 3

- 1 Here I use the text of Julian to convey the panorama over a vast, tessellated space: *Jul. Mis.* 362C: “Your city possesses ten thousand lots of land privately owned.” (translated by W.C. Right). However, this is a space that is also greatly contested: at 370D Julian fuels his polemic against the local curiales in reference to their appropriation of 3,000 uncultivated lots of land, κλήροι γῆς of unspecified size. These allotments were imperial possessions in the territory of Antioch and thus amenable to taxation. Failure to fiscally report their revenues and irregularities in land distribution lead Julian to revoke the concession and take the assets away from the curiales. As a punishment, he mandated that the culprits be forced to perform a most expensive liturgy, that of the upkeep of the horses in the hippodrome, to the advantage of the civic constituency. For the analysis of this case, see Gascou 1977.
- 2 Scarborough 2003, 4366.
- 3 Wilkinson 2003, 16; Downey, *History*, 735–738. Twenty major earthquakes struck Antioch between the first and the sixth centuries CE. Among the best known are the one in

- 148 BCE under Alexander Balas, two under Caligula and Claudius respectively, the one that almost killed Trajan in 115 (see on this D.C.68. 24–25), one in 341 AD under Constantius II, two more in 458 AD and 526AD, and finally the catastrophic event under Justinian in 528 AD, that killed thousands of people, see Procop. *Goth.* 2, 14, 6; *Malalas* 18.27: “The sixth calamity from the wrath of God.”
- 4 “The City of God.” In *Malalas* 18.29 is also the anecdote of the recovery of a written oracle, by which “You, unhappy city, shall not be called the city of Antiochos.” See also *Evagrius* 4.6. Vest 2012, 181 reports on the Armenian sources on this matter. Lastly, it should be noted that at this same time Mt. Staurin acquired its denomination on account of the appearance of a cross in the sky.
 - 5 Plb. 5.59.
 - 6 Downey, *History* 50, on the accounts of Libanius and John Malalas.
 - 7 Sartre 2001, 124.
 - 8 Vest 2012, 190.
 - 9 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 211–226.
 - 10 Callot 1984.
 - 11 Weulersse 1940, 80: “*L’Oronte n’est donc pas seulement un grand nom; à la différence de beaucoup de ses frères de gloire, tels le Céphise et l’Eurotas, c’est un fleuve dont les eaux ne coulent pas seulement dans la légende; ils coulent aussi dans la réalité, faisant tourner norias et moulins, arrosant des villes, et portant au loin tantôt les fièvres et la désolation.*”
 - 12 The Corona imagery application had satisfactory results in this type of research in that it recorded the landscape of the Amuq Valley in the late 60’s, prior to intensive development and mechanical farming. It also allowed for the identification of numerous sites that have now been destroyed or that are no longer visible.
 - 13 Braidwood, *Mounds* Figure 1.
 - 14 Braidwood, *Mounds* 10.
 - 15 See Chapter 1, p. 17
 - 16 In keeping with the surveys of Braidwood, the AVRП finessed the evolutionary narrative for the basin using sedimentary deposits, shoreline features, and the location of archaeological sites in relation to the lake itself through geomorphological investigations: Casana 2007, 197–199. For the configuration of the lake and its marshes in the first millennium BCE, as well for the description of the historical corollary and the possible ties with Shalmaneser III campaigning in 858 BCE across the swampy territory of Patina/Unqi see Batiuk 2007, 56–57.
 - 17 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 214; Eger 2011, 65–70.
 - 18 Jerusalem Talmud (*Horayoth* 3.4)
 - 19 Lib. 11. 260–262.
 - 20 Matthews 2006, 90.
 - 21 Redford 2012, 302.
 - 22 Jacquot 1931, 1, 55.
 - 23 Eger 2011.
 - 24 Biladuri, 167 in Le Strange 1965, 367. On similar patterns in the Ghab Valley: Vannesse 2011, 35. See also Thonemann 2011, 182.
 - 25 *Levi, Pavements*, LXXVII.
 - 26 Situated on the fringe of the Mediterranean climate region, the Amuq Valley receives an average of 500–700 mm of rainfall per annum. These figures support simple rain-fed cultivation and lead to optimal results of crop yields when intensive techniques and irrigation are introduced. It must be borne in mind, however, that these values drop very low during the summer months, with a mere 10 mm between July and September.
 - 27 Wilkinson et al. 2001.
 - 28 Bridgland et al. 2012, 42.
 - 29 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 215.
 - 30 Yener et al. 2000, 169–179.
 - 31 Yener et al. 2000, 173.
 - 32 Yener et al. 2000, 177–179.
 - 33 Mitchell 2005, 87–93.
 - 34 Braidwood 1937.
 - 35 Bell 1907, 320.
 - 36 For a detailed account of the characteristics of the road in this area, see Poidebard 1929a where he presents cross-sections as well as a surface description: 6.30 m in width and approximately 1.30 to 2 m in depth. This same stretch of the Antioch-Chalcis road that Poidebard visited and documented in April 1928 was encountered later in 1936 by Braidwood during his survey of the plain. See *Braidwood, Mounds* 40. For the contextualization of this road within the network of Syrian axes of traffic in antiquity see also Poidebard 1929b and 1934.
 - 37 Str. 16. 2. 4.
 - 38 The provisions of the peace of Apamea included the loss of satrapies north of the Taurus Mt, thus reducing the Seleucid presence in Asia to the sole coastal regions of Pamphylia and Cilicia. The Tanais river then became the northern border of the Seleucid kingdom. *Livy* 38. 38. 4–5. See also Sève 2004, 21–41.

- 39 Sardis at the time of Antiochos III and the system of colonies that the city engendered is illuminating in this sense. See *SEG* 39.1289 and also Thonemann 2011, 242–251.
- 40 Because of its position straddling the Amanus and the Amuq Plain, Meleagrum is described in Chapter 4.
- 41 Ma 2000, 341, in which he illustrates the cases of Smyrna and Miletos.
- 42 Talbert 2010.
- 43 Str. 16.2.8. For a description of the castle, see Sinclair 1990, 266–271.
- 44 Kramer 2004, 265–269.
- 45 Haines 1971, 10–13, 31–34; pls, 49C, 62, 63B.
- 46 These figures are grounded into the 1999–2005 AVRPA archaeological survey; as they stand, they don't include sites investigated by Braidwood now situated in modern Syria.
- 47 How Antioch administrated its *kleros* system in the Hellenistic era is difficult to establish. The evidence from contexts in western Asia suggests that the lots allotted to citizens and veterans were susceptible to *phoros* and alienable. Whether the status of Seleucid “capital” carried any exemptions for Antioch's citizens cannot be determined either. See Thonemann 2011, 242–251.
- 48 St. Byz. 317. Θρακῶν κώμη, πλησίον Ἀντιοχείας. Τὸ ἐθνικὸν κατὰ τέχνην Θρακικοκωμήτης. Contingents of Thracian colonists figured prominently in the ranks of the Seleucid army.
- 49 Downey, *History* 154; see also Downey 1958 and Will 1997. See also *Malalas* 10.8–9.
- 50 A cursory survey of Antakya's north-eastern suburbs carried out by Casana in 2001 along the slopes of Mount Silpius reinforces the hypothesis of Antioch's urban and suburban expansion and documented the devastating effects of Antakya's modern expansion. See Casana 2004.
- 51 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 223.
- 52 This is of interest as it supports the view that upon the annexation of the Province of Syria, the Roman administration avoided confiscation and distribution of land and rather maintained the *status quo*; see F. Millar 1993.
- 53 Lib. *Ep.* 126, 359–360.
- 54 Jer. *Vita Malchi* 3, 1–4. The religious profile of this community is of interest; a weathered, and now lost inscription from Imma-briefly recorded by AVRPA in 2001-mentions an arch-bishop and appears to be dated to the patriarchate of Ephraem in AD 530–532: see *SEG* 1603. The find is also commented in Gerritsen, De Giorgi, Eger et al. 2008, 264 and *BE* 2006, 449.
- 55 Downey 1950.
- 56 Sinclair 1990, 295–296. I should also mention that upon the last AVRPA visit at the site in 2005 substantial ashlar blocks were being quarried away by mechanical excavators some 500 m west of the reservoir. That they belonged to a fortification is somewhat likely.
- 57 *Theod.HR.* 7.1. That the titles of these villages were rather arbitrary is a concrete possibility. In particular, see the Korikos dossier as presented in *MAMA* III, 240, in which Imma is mentioned as χωρίον Ἰμμῶν. For a general assessment of the question see n.63.
- 58 *Theod.HR.* 7.4
- 59 Leveau 1995, 115–144.
- 60 Scarborough 1991, 106.
- 61 On the social configuration of these rural communities, their leaders (whether πρωτοκωμήται or δεκαπρώτοι) and governance see Dagron 1984. As for the difficulties in producing a taxonomy of villages and a sense of hierarchy see Perrin 2001, 211–235, and especially Gatier 2004, 106–110, that systematically lays out the semantics of the proto-Byzantine countryside in spite of much fragmented evidence. Gatier shows that the transition from κώμη to χωρίον, with the latter replacing the former occurred in the sixth century.
- 62 Feissel 1985. The canal plausibly radiated from the Orontes in the vicinity of the Palace on the Island, according to John Rufus, *Plerophories*, 88, and continued its 2.6 km course in the direction of the Amanus Mt. See Leblanc-Poccardi 2004, 245.
- 63 Lib. *Or.* 47, 5: ..καὶ ὡς ποταμῶν ἀποστεροῦσι ... For the general discussion on predicaments and tension tied to irrigation systems in the countryside, as well as the range of remedies to offset them see Grey 2011, 113–115.
- 64 Eger 2014a, shows that the sultan in object is in actuality Īnāl, thus pushing back the chronology to the early fifteenth century.
- 65 Ainsworth 1888, 38.
- 66 ... *arcu donatus* ... *IGLS* 3, 1, 744.
- 67 The village apparently housed a sanctuary of Artemis and Apollo that is mentioned by Libanius: *Or.* 5, 42–43; 11, 59–65. Of interest is also

- the boundary marker that signaled the *epoikia* of Komodos and Primos in the vicinity of Narlica: see *IGLS* 3.1.872. This is yet another case of anthroponomy for a settlement module – that of the *epoikia* – that appears prominent in the later Roman empire in particular in Egypt, and that as we shall see, is also attested in the Antiochene. See in particular *IGLS* 3.1: 883, 884, and 3, 2, 1031.
- 68 *Antioch III*, 22–23: “It seems that the bath, small as it is, was a public building erected alongside of a large farm that doubtless formed part of a group of similar construction.”
- 69 Small of forts of this kind are populate the Roman East and especially Jordan and Syria, where their connection with large arteries of traffic is comparable to that at AS 190. See Gregory 1997 and Kennedy–Riley 1990. This is indeed a site that is worth further inspection in order to ascertain its building agencies and usage. Eger, however, suggests that the building resembles an Early Islamic fortified enclosure, in harmony with the design of waystations. See Eger 2012, 62–63.
- 70 Wilkinson et al. 2001, 214.
- 71 Casana 2003, 64–65.
- 72 Casana 2003, 75.
- 73 It is noticeable how small markets could spring thanks to the initiative of a local grandee. For the case of Dionysios, son of Alexandros, sponsoring the construction of a grain market at Issos (or Epiphaneia, in the western Amanus region) during the early imperial period, see Dagron–Feissel 1987, 209–211.
- 74 *Theod.HR* 7.1–3. See also de Ligt 1993, 73.
- 75 Gatier 2005, 106.
- 76 *Theod.HR* 2.9. Gindarus is a good example of institutional mobility and of the difficulties that village denominations in the Antiochene posit. The town received a fortification under Theodosius I, and seemingly gained the title of κῶμοπολις. Within a few decades, however, it is referred to as κῶμη μεγίστη, for it grew in size and religious prominence. See Dagron 1979, 32, and Gatier 2005, 109.
- 77 Kramer 2004, 63–66.
- 78 Kramer 2004.
- 79 Binggeli 2012, 287–289.
- 80 Heichelheim 1938, 244.
- 81 Vell. 2. 117. Some emperors were abreast of this problem and at times they would personally intervene, as in the case of Domitian, who reassured the community of Hama/Epiphaneia that he would bring illicit activities to a halt. *IGLS* 5. 1998 is essentially an imperial *mandatum* to the Syrian procurator made public so as to acknowledge the existence of a problem and to inform the community of the emperor’s determination to solve it. On Libanius’ epoch, see Oration 50.
- 82 A Letoios apparently owned a village in the Antiochene: *Theod.HE* 14 (PG 82, 1413B).
- 83 Cracco–Ruggini 1961, 23.
- 84 Feissel 1991, 295. See also earlier note on the case of Narlica.
- 85 Liebeschuetz 1972, 61–73.
- 86 See in particular n.1.
- 87 Weulersse 1934, 30–31.
- 88 Liebeschuetz 1972, 42, and footnote 2.
- 89 *Levi, Pavements* 55, LXXXI; 346–348, LXXXII; see also Balty 1973.
- 90 Downey 1938; *Levi, Pavements* 253–257; Leader–Newby 2005.
- 91 Levi 1944.
- 92 Heichelheim 1938.
- 93 Laniado 2002, 6.
- 94 *Jul. Mis.* 367D. Bowersock 1978, 73–74; with regards to volunteering see the case of the Arabian Gaudentius in Antioch, *PLRE* 1.2.385.
- 95 Laniado 2002, 133. As for the emergence of the *Honorati* in Antioch see the cases of Irenaios and Dorotheos, *CJ* 10, 32, 61, whose exemptions from munera were established by imperial decree in 459/460. See also Laniado 2002, 24 and Liebeschuetz 1972, 187.
- 96 Laniado 2002, 141.
- 97 *Evagrius* 3. 28; *PLRE* 2, 1, 705.
- 98 Cabouret 2004.
- 99 Kokkinia 2008, 148.
- 100 Garnsey 1988, 19.
- 101 See Orosius *Hist.* 7.6.12. For a summary of these crises see Cabouret 2004, 126–132.
- 102 Downey 1941, 207–213.
- 103 Eger, De Giorgi et al. Forthcoming. The current autopsy of the collections from 17–O (originally excavated by the Princeton team in 1937) aims at re-contextualizing the material culture within the stratigraphy as teased out from groundplans, sections and the excavation reports. It is hoped that the results will cast new light on the topographic questions that the dig originally set out to explore, and on the sequence of occupation phases.
- 104 *Evagrius* 2.12.
- 105 *Evagrius* 1.18.

CHAPTER 4

- 1 *Dussaud*, 440.
- 2 *Cic. Ad Fam.* 2.9, 1–2. See on this matter Shaw 1990, 201.
- 3 *Theod. HR*, 9.10.
- 4 Trowbridge 1872, 407.
- 5 According to Theodoret, the Amanus was infested by the “madness of polytheism.” *HR*, 6, 4.
- 6 Casana 2003, 53.
- 7 Robert-Robert 1983, 104.
- 8 *Plin. HN*. 16, 52, 55, 197.
- 9 Yener 2005, 346–347. The information is scant: allegedly, the dedications were intended to protect travelers. All the same, the whereabouts are unclear (“between Antioch and Rhossos”), and no autopsy of the text is presented. For the discussion of the documents see *SEG* 55.1600.
- 10 Newell 1918, 133.
- 11 Alkim 1969, 280. For the survival of these pathways in modern times, see Jacquot 1931.
- 12 *IGLS* 8.3; Sartre 2005, 208.
- 13 Mikesell 1969, 19–20.
- 14 *Proc. Aed.* 5, 6.
- 15 *SEG* 49, 2105. See also Yon-Gatier 2010, 102–105 and Sartre 2005, 209.
- 16 Sartre 1999, 219–222.
- 17 Wilkinson 2003, 26.
- 18 Vallino Albergoni-Guazzo Albergoni 1975, 129. *Dio* 40.29, 1–2.
- 19 *J. AJ.* 14.441; *Amm.* 22.14.4; *Lib.* 11.19, 25, 254; for *Dio*’s remarks on Antigoneia and the Parthians see p. 51.
- 20 Vallino Albergoni-Guazzo Albergoni 1975, 129.
- 21 *Levi, Pavements*: plates LXXVII, LXXVIII, LXXII, LXXXVI, LXXIV.
- 22 Hatay Arkeoloji Müzesi, inventory n.1016. *Levi, Pavements* 323–326; 363–365. On hunting mosaics see also Lavin 1963, Balty 1984, 437–468, and Balty 1969 for a description of Apamea’s Triclinios mosaic, of the late fourth century. For the allegorical reading of these scenes: Becker-Kondoleon 2005, 233–236.
- 23 Newman 2005, 62–70. During the 2002 season the AVR P Survey collected stone cylinders at the sites of Kisecik and Serinyol. They measured between 10 to 22 cm and may be considered as the raw matter from which each individual tessera would be successively cut. The color and matrix of the stone cylinders was comparable to the dolomites identified in several mosaics examined by a Worcester team led by Kristine Kondoleon.
- 24 *IGLS* 3.1.738: Βαράδατος|Διογένους ἐξ[εῖ]|-ματὸ εἰστάξι[ν]| βῳτανῶν [ῥθε]-ν(?)|ἐνμόνον|χαίρετε. For additional comments on the text see also *BE* 1946. 355; *BE* 1951. 198.
- 25 *Evagrius* 2.9; *Theod. HR*, 27. A Βαράδαδος is attested at Zeugma on a funerary stele that presumably dates to the second-third centuries CE: see Wagner 1976, n. 78. Taf. 40. On the origin of the name see L. Robert in *CRAI*, 1975, 314 n.24.
- 26 Casana 2007, 203.
- 27 Wilkinson et al. 2001.
- 28 Redford 2012, 300.
- 29 *RE*, “Pagras.”
- 30 Jacquot 1931, 193; Sinclair 1990, 270.
- 31 Jacquot 1931, 196. For a detailed description of the site, see Sinclair 1990, 266–271.
- 32 Braidwood, Mounds, 41.
- 33 *IGLS* 3.1.744, “. . . arcu donatus.”
- 34 Geyer-Kuntz 1965.
- 35 *Life of St. Simeon* 188. The text situates Apate “near the city.”
- 36 *AAES* 1920, 230.
- 37 Decker 2007, 499–520.
- 38 Fossey-Perdrizet 1897, 88. *Ce qui fait l’interêt de cette colline abrupte, c’est qu’on y trouve des restes de dates fort diverses, depuis la vieille époque Syrienne, celle qu’on est convenu d’appeler Hittite, jusqu’à l’époque Gréco-romaine: comme si les rochers de Kara-Moughara avait été l’objet, dès les temps les plus anciens, d’une veneration particulière: comme s’il avait servi de haut lieu pour les sacrifices, été recherché comme endroit de sepulture.*
- 39 Blömer 2009, 14–18.
- 40 Hatay Arkeoloji Müzesi, inventory no. 11093. See the discussion of the stele and the events that followed its recovery at Tell Kurd Oğlou (Kurcuoğlu Höyük) by Mac Ewan of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, Chapter 1, n.2. For a concise description of the stele see Merlat 1951, 382.
- 41 Sinclair 1990, 297.
- 42 Jacquot 1931, 180.
- 43 *Tchalenko, Villages* 190; LXII 1. 3; CLXXV.3.
- 44 Chapot 1902, 190.
- 45 *I. Ephesos* VII. 2.3827; see also Dignas 2005, 213.
- 46 For a rendition of the Burğ Bâqirhâ shrine see *Tchalenko, Villages*, PL. VIII. See also Segal 2003, 72; Gawlikowski 1989, 335–336.

- 47 *PUAES* 2.6. XXVI. See also Gatier 1997, 768–769.
- 48 *IGLS* 3.1.741.
- 49 *BE* 1946, 355.
- 50 Str. 16. 2. 8. See also *BE* 1946, 355. *Tchalenko, Villages* 2.Pl. III, also reprised by Casana 2004, 103. See the map of Syria in Mouterde-Poidebard 1945. It should also be noted that in the same passage Strabo mentions the elusive site of Τραπεζών. Here in 39 BCE the army of P. Ventidius Bassus clashed with the Persians commanded by Pharnapates. See *RE*, “Τραπεζών.”
- 51 Eger 2014a.
- 52 *IGLS* 3.1.740.
- 53 McNeill 1992, 353.
- 54 Foss 1997, 190–204; Eger 2014b.
- 55 Horden-Purcell 2000, 236.
- 56 Amm. 14.1.9: ... *et adhibitis paucis clam ferro succinctis, vesperi per tabernas palabatur et compita, quaeritando Graeco sermone, cuius erat impendio gnarus, quid de Caesare quisque sentiret. Et haec confidenter agebat in urbe, ubi pernoctantium luminum claritudo dierum solet imitari fulgorem.* Translated by J. C. Rolfe.
- 57 Arist. *Const.* 16.6.
- 58 John Chrys *De stat.* 17.2. See also Lavan 2007, 160.
- 59 Casana 2003, 35.
- 60 Yener et al. 2000, 169.
- 61 Georges Tchalenko was of course the pioneer of fieldwork in the Syrian Jibāl, see *Tchalenko, Villages*. George Tate continued Tchalenko’s legacy and rectified many of his interpretational frameworks, see Tate 1992. Other more problem-oriented projects followed in their footsteps, see for instance Callot 1997, or Peña, Castellana, Fernández 1990, 1992, 1999.
- 62 Brown 1971, 84.
- 63 *Theod.HR* 2. 17–18.
- 64 On the religious character of this landscape see Shepardson 2014, 164–171.
- 65 *Theod.HR* 2, 21. Of relevance is also Hull’s analysis of the monastic communities’ siting and their physical relation with villages: Hull 2008.
- 66 Gatier 1997, 768. *Tchalenko, Villages* I, 35. For a comprehensive treatment of the region’s necropoleis see Griesheimer 1997, 165–211.
- 67 *Tchalenko, Villages* II, Plate XC.
- 68 Alcock and Cherry 2004.
- 69 Downey, *History*, 151–157. The Caesarian time-reckoning system as adopted by Antioch begins with Caesar’s victory at Pharsalus in June of 48 BCE. However, the official inception of the calendar was pushed back to the previous year, that is October 1st, 49 BCE.
- 70 *Tchalenko, Villages* III.
- 71 Seyrig in *Tchalenko, Villages* III, 12–14.
- 72 For a boundary-stone of the late sixth century near the village of Bizika see *IGLS* 2. 530; Yon-Gatier 2009, 114–115, and Trombley 2004, 99.
- 73 See in particular the inscriptions of the Tetrarchic period in Millar 1993, 536–538; Tate 1997, 60–61.
- 74 Zerbini 2012, 69.
- 75 Sodini et al. 1980. The excavation at Dehès was critical in calling into question many of Tchalenko’s assumptions.
- 76 The temple of Zeus Madbachoson Mt. Corypheus (Šeikh Barakāt) is one of the earliest monuments on the Jibāl, as its portico and cella were built near the end of the first century CE, see Gawlikowski 1989, 335. See discussion in the text later.
- 77 *Tchalenko, Villages*, p.300–311.
- 78 *Tchalenko, Villages* I, 92. Gatier 1997.
- 79 *IGLS* 2. 569.
- 80 *IGLS* 2. 488. Millar 1993, 253–254.
- 81 For a more detailed discussion of these three sanctuaries, see Tchalenko, *Villages* 105–109.
- 82 Liebeschuetz 2007, 427.
- 83 *Tchalenko, Villages* III, 21–28.
- 84 *Tchalenko, Villages* III, 22–23.
- 85 On the fundamental, ongoing revision of the early surveys in the Massif Calcaire and new emphasis on wine production see Callot 2013, 97–109.
- 86 *Theod.HR* 24, 7.
- 87 Decker 2001, 69–86.
- 88 Horden-Purcell 2000, 212.
- 89 Horden-Purcell 2000, 274; Callot 1984, 126.
- 90 Callot 2013, 102.
- 91 Callot 2013, 98.
- 92 Tate 1992, 91–93.
- 93 Zerbini 2012, 77–83.
- 94 Tate 1992, 243.
- 95 Callot 1984.
- 96 Gerritsen, De Giorgi, et al. 2008, 258–263.
- 97 *Tchalenko, Villages* 327.
- 98 *IGLS* 2. 376.
- 99 Sartre 1996, 247. See in particular Liebeschuetz 2007, 430, in which he discusses the cumulative evidence and the paucity of Latin inscriptions of Roman veterans. He infers that there is

- nothing “to suggest that there had been systematic settlement of veterans, though it does show that veterans were included in the village elite.” Who the elites of the limestone massif were still remains to be established; nevertheless, it is appropriate to suggest that though Roman veterans populated this region in scanty numbers, they were engines behind its growth in rural settlement and urbanism.
- 100 Liebeschuetz 1972, 66.
 101 Yener et al. 2000, 177.
 102 Callot 2013, 108.
 103 Foss 1997, 190–191.
 104 John Lydus 3.54; John of Ephesus 6.4–5; Michael the Syrian 9.4; cf. Proc. *De Bello Persico* 2.9.16; Mas’ūdī, *Morūj*, ed. Pellat, I, p. 307.
 105 Proc. *de Aed.* 2.5.
 106 The discussion of the archaeological evidence of the Massif Calcaire as put forth by Callot 2013 has bearing on our understanding of agricultural production on the Jabal al-‘Akra. Again, the state of the evidence hampers a more nuanced analysis of the archaeological record, and the textual sources remain critical in assessing the nature of the communities that occupied this sub-region.
 107 Lib. *Ep.* 177.8.
 108 De Giorgi 2007, 294.
 109 Antioch mosaics have long been treated as metrics of opulence and cultural sophistication: *Levi, Pavements* and *Lost Ancient City*.
 110 For a presentation of the ceramics and material evidence that underpin these analyses: Gerritsen et al. 2008, 260–266.
 111 Duncan Jones 2004, 38–39.
 112 Mattingly 1988, 33–56.
 113 Pamir 2010a, 78–90; Callot 1984, pl.61.
 114 Downey 1958, 84–91.
 115 Callot 1984, 103.
 116 Jones 1964, 768.
 117 Decker 2001, 83; see for instance the case of Elaiussa Sebaste and Korykos in Cilicia, in Iacomi 2010, 19–32.
 118 de Vos-Andreoli et al. 2007; Varinlioglu 2007.
 119 Lib. 11. 261.
 120 Heichelheim 1938.
 121 *Levi, Pavements*, 40–45.
 122 Sartre 1996, 247.
 123 *IGLS* 2.448; 455.
 124 *IGLS* 2.438; 519.
 125 Tate 1992, 290.
 126 Leveau 1977, 302.
 127 Bowersock 1983, 106.
 128 Mann 1983, 43.
 129 For the discussion of Daphne’s archaeological evidence, see Chapter 5.
 130 Hales 2003, 171–191.
 131 Bowersock 1994a, 141–159.
- ## CHAPTER 5
- 1 *OGIS* 456; for a new edition of the text see Rowe 2002, 133–135.
 2 Mécérian 1964, La Fontaine-Dosogne 1967, Djobadze 1986. Henry 2015 offers a critical analysis of these studies within new interpretative frameworks.
 3 Lassus 1947, 129–132; *Tchalenko, Villages*, 223–276.
 4 Van Berchem 1985, 51–61.
 5 *BMC Galatia* 151–152, nos. I–II.
 6 Lib 11, 259.
 7 Str. 16.2.7.
 8 *CTh* 10, 23, 1; *CJ* 11, 13, 1. On the Justinianic drainage works see Proc. *Aed.* 2.10.6–7.
 9 Chesney 1838, 228. It is worth noting that Bin-kiliseh in Turkish means “the 1,000 Churches,” a toponym that strongly characterizes the cultural profile of the region in antiquity.
 10 Hoffmann 1841, 208.
 11 Millar 1993, 103.
 12 Uggeri 2009.
 13 Van Berchem 1983, 185–196; *CRAI* 1951, 255, fully discussed by Feissel 1985. On the activities of M. Ulpius Traianus in Syria see Bowersock 1973.
 14 *IGLS* 3.2.1142. On the findspot see Chapot 1902, 166–168.
 15 Hoffmann 1841, 208.
 16 Lib. *Or.* 11.34–41. Of course the point of the oration is to extol the city and its perks beyond measure; the role of Seleucia is deliberately downplayed in this rhetorical scheme. Nevertheless, the impression that Seleucia was deemed as an appendix of Antioch resonates in the sources, see for instance *Expositio*, 160.
 17 Cohen 2006, 126.
 18 *Antioch on the Orontes III*, 3.
 19 Djobadze 1986, 118.
 20 Mécérian 1964, 73–76.
 21 Plb. 5.58–60.
 22 Millar 1993, 103–104.
 23 With regards to Constantius’s repairs of the harbor at Seleucia and the benefits they carried

- to Antioch, see Julian's *Laudatio Constantii*: Or.1, 40D–41A: "Her existence she does indeed owe to her founder, but her present wealth and increase in every sort of abundance she owes to you, since you provided her with harbours that offer good anchorage for those who put in there (Translated by W. C. Right). Also: Lib. Ep. 311; *Expositio*, 163.
- 24 Van Berchem 1985, 52.
- 25 Uggeri 2006, 166.
- 26 *IGLS* 3.2. 1155–1182.
- 27 *Malalas* 11.3.
- 28 Vorderstrasse 2005.
- 29 Uggeri 2006, 152. In 1652 the Patriarch of Antioch Macarius visited the site of Seleucia. Aside from extolling the site and its waters, the Arab chronicler mentions the existence of a church of St. Thecla and the monastery of St. Sergius. At the time of Pococke's visit in the early eighteenth century little remained to be seen, and he mentions the city walls, as well as traces of secular and religious buildings. He pines over the loss of the magnificent buildings mentioned by Polybius. See Pococke 1738, 185–186.
- 30 *Antioch on the Orontes* III, 2–7; 31–34; 35–54. Fossey–Perdrizet 1897; Perdrizet 1924, 324–325, in which he illustrates his reconnaissance at the city. He identified two temples, one Ionic and one Doric of the second century BCE. Notably, his architect Boselli drew the first archaeological map of Seleucia identifying features that are no longer visible, and primarily the hippodrome.
- 31 *Antioch on the Orontes* III, 3–4.
- 32 Str. 16.2.8.
- 33 McNicoll 1997, 85–89.
- 34 Plb. 5.59.1; Perdrizet 1924; Chapot 1907b.
- 35 Pamir 2005, 73–75.
- 36 Wages 1986; Potter 2004, 173.
- 37 Dobbins 2000, 55.
- 38 Woolley 1938; 1953.
- 39 Downey, *History* 53.
- 40 Vorderstrasse 2005.
- 41 *Malalas* 11.3 mentions Bytyllion, "a natural harbor near Seleucia" with regards to Trajan's campaigns against the Parthians. While the port may have been already in existence during the second century CE, we should also exert prudence, as *Malalas's* text is riddled with anachronisms: see Liebeschuetz 2004, 143–153.
- 42 Dagron–Feissel 1985, 435–455.
- 43 Dagron–Feissel 1985, 448.
- 44 Uggeri 2009, 170.
- 45 See n.23.
- 46 Lib. Ep. 68, in the edition by F. Norman.
- 47 On the stripping of monuments under Constantine see Bassett 2005, 50–78.
- 48 Amm.19.12.6–8.
- 49 *Evagrius* 1.18. See also Downey, *History*, 454–455.
- 50 Lewin 2001, 33.
- 51 Seyrig 1986, 202–203. See also Aliquot 2015.
- 52 Wroth 2011, LXXI–LXXII, 272–274.
- 53 Lib. Or. 15, 79.
- 54 Bonnet 1987, 128; Salac 1922, 162–163.
- 55 West 1997, 304; Saliou 1999–2000, 378–379.
- 56 Str. 16.2.5. Saliou 1999–2000, 381.
- 57 Lib. 11. 51–52.
- 58 Lib. Ep. 1221F, 2.121, in which a system of gardens, presumably defined by a precinct, constituted the city Eleusinion.
- 59 *SEG* 1601; Feissel 1985, 98.
- 60 Downey, *History* 213; *HA*, Vita Hadriani 44; Amm. Marc. 22, 14.
- 61 Djobadze 1986, 5–6; Mécérian 1967, 61 n. 64. Lafontaine 1967, 59–60. See also Schaeffer 1938, 323–327.
- 62 Seyrig 1986, V2, p.202.
- 63 *Life of St. Barlaam*, Iviron MS 84, fols 107–112, in Djobadze 1986, 4–5; see also Aliquot 2015, 159.
- 64 Lafontaine 1967, 59.
- 65 Matthews 2006, 56–61.
- 66 Djobadze 1986, 54.
- 67 *Dussaud* 424.
- 68 *Dussaud* 423.
- 69 Mécérian 1964, 59–61.
- 70 Djobadze 1986, 55.
- 71 Pamir 2010a, 75–96.
- 72 Bridgland–Westaway 2012, 43–45.
- 73 Mécérian 1964, 45. Only the piers of the bridge survive and a milestone found nearby—now lost—may be dating to Lucius Verus 162–163. As for the location of the bridges commissioned by Ephraem see n.14.
- 74 Lib. Or. 11. 233–234; *Life of St. Simeon* 167.
- 75 Feissel 1991, 288–294.
- 76 See p. 53.
- 77 Djobadze 1986, 57.
- 78 Sinclair 1990, 301–303.
- 79 Henry 2015, 84–87.
- 80 Lafontaine 1967. No information by the excavators justifies this appraisal, but it may be inferred that they were thinking of the legions involved in the making of the Orontes corridor. See also Henry 2015, 106–108.

- 81 *Life of St. Simeon* 97. 14–16. Pamir 2010b, 462–463.
- 82 *Life of St. Simeon* 97: Ἐν ἀρχαίοις ἑλληνικοῖς χρόνοις. . .
- 83 Djobadze 1986, 58.
- 84 Dussaud 427: *Le sultan Beibars s'en empare en 1268, incendie la ville, tue ou déporte sa population. Depuis, Antioche n'est plus qu'une modeste bourgade et Daphné une ruine.*
- 85 Pococke 1745, 193.
- 86 It is improbable though that the street retained any element of monumentality as it exited the city from its southern and northern gates.
- 87 Plb. 30.25.11.
- 88 Lib. *Or.* 11.243. See Downey, *History*, 221.
- 89 *Antioch on the Orontes* II, 49–56.
- 90 Brands 2009.
- 91 It should be stressed that the Princeton excavations brought to light six baths complexes located on the island and within the city walls. The literary record is our only source of documentation for the *thermae* on the slopes of Mt. Silpius and Staurin. See Poccardi 2009, 282.
- 92 IGLS 3.2.1031.
- 93 *I. Ankara*, 146.
- 94 Cribiore 2007, 26; Lib 11.94–99.
- 95 Panel B, Room 16. *Levi, Pavements*, 211–214. It should be mentioned that the theme appears also in the *House of the Boat of Psyche*, Panel D, Room 3: *Levi, Pavements*, 167.
- 96 I shall return to this characterization of Antiochenes in Chapter 6.
- 97 Phil.16.
- 98 *Levi, Pavements* 68–89.
- 99 Nonnos, *Dyonisiaca*, 17.306–314.
- 100 John Chrys. *Adv. Jud.* 1, 6. The history of Antioch's Jewry is well documented: see in particular Sandwell 2007; Kasher 1982; Meeks–Wilken 1978; Kraeling 1932.
- 101 Downey, *History* 5.
- 102 On the sanctuary, the oracle and its practices see Cabouret 1994. For a remarkable representation of the oracle of Apollo art Daphne see Will 1983.
- 103 Julian's journey from the sanctuary of Zeus Casius to Daphne is of great interest. The emperor's sense of anticipation, excitement, and anxieties inevitably clashed with the state of disrepair he found at Daphne: Jul. *Mis.* 361D–362B.
- 104 Lib 60. 9–11.
- 105 *Antioch on the Orontes* II, 1–4; Plateau 49–53: Theater 57–94, Yakto 94–147; *Antioch on the Orontes* III, 1–8.
- 106 *Antioch Archives*, Diary Summer 1934.
- 107 *Antioch on the Orontes* II, 49.
- 108 *Antioch on the Orontes* II, 50.
- 109 Çelik 2009, 41–52 and Gutzwiller–Çelik 2012, 573–623.
- 110 *Antioch Archives*, Field Report 1936.
- 111 Barbet 2004, 1591.
- 112 Dobbins 2000, 59.
- 113 *Levi, Pavements* 127–141; Stillwell 1961, 51; Morvillez 2004, 275–278.
- 114 *Levi, Pavements* 127–141. Stillwell 1961, 51.
- 115 “Un habitant du quartier du III^e siècle n'aurait certainement pas reconnu le lieu métamorphosé deux cent ans plus tard.” Morvillez 2004, 280.
- 116 See for instance the *House of Ge and Seasons* : *Levi, Pavements* 346–347.
- 117 *Antioch on the Orontes* I, 95–147. Verzone 2011, 219–225.
- 118 *Antioch on the Orontes* I, 98.
- 119 *Levi, Pavements* 323–345; *Lost Ancient City*.
- 120 Lavin 1963, 190.
- 121 See Chapter 2, p. 63.

CHAPTER 6

- 1 *Or.* 11. 34–41.
- 2 Wolschke–Bulmahn 2001, 1–5.
- 3 Siapkias 2014.
- 4 Gruen 2010.
- 5 Antonaccio 2003.
- 6 Luraghi 2014
- 7 *Or.* 11.84; *Evagrius*, 1.20.
- 8 Saliou 1999–2000, 358.
- 9 Guidi 1897, 137–161. See also Kennedy 1992, 184.
- 10 See in particular Haddad 1949.
- 11 In Matt. 7.7.79.
- 12 Plut. *Cato*. 13.
- 13 Prop. 2.23.21.
- 14 Juv. 3.58.
- 15 On the survival of these practices during the sixth century CE see Bowersock 1996, 37.
- 16 *Malalas* 10.20 on stir in the city under Tiberius.
- 17 Paris: Blomfield 1892, 145, n.3. Vienna: B.M. Metger 1948, 87.
- 18 *Lost Ancient City*; Becker–Kondoleon 2005. On the complicated nature of Antioch see Brown 1988, 314.
- 19 Antioch was often the arena for trials, litigations, and requests for arbitration and judgment

- from the inhabitants of the Antiochene district and beyond. In August of the year 245 CE, four farmers by name Archodes son of Phal-laïos, Philotas son of Nisraïabos, Vorodes son of Sumisbarachos and Abezautas son of Abe-diardas, all from Beth Phouraia, a village on the Euphrates in the vicinity of Doura Europos, came to Antioch to petition the governor Julius Priscus to put an end to a long controversy over land and other unspecified assets. In filing their request at the baths of Hadrian, presumably located on the colonnaded street, the party of four, representing a much larger “group of others,” asked the governor to resolve a dispute with some fellow villagers who were threatening to take their land and assets away in an open infringement of the laws enforced by the Romans. See Euphrates I, Feissel-Gascou 1989, 535–561.
- 20 Brown 1988, 305–316.
- 21 Cribiore 2007; Pasquato 1976; Liebeschuetz 1972; Festugière 1959.
- 22 Siapkias 2014, 71.
- 23 On Antioch as Athens: *Or.* 11. 184. As for John Chrysostom’s ideal Antioch: *Hom. 15 de statu* I: 153–354.
- 24 John Chrys. *Hom.* 19. 1; Pasquato 1976, 32.
- 25 See in particular the AD 1138 panegyric for John II Komnenos by Nikephoros Basilakes, in Maisano 1977, 122.
- 26 Theod. *HR* 8.2; 13.1.
- 27 Clackson 2012, 49.
- 28 Dagron-Feissel 1985, 457–459.
- 29 Vespasian’s typical post AD 71 titles are dismissed by this rather unique and unceremonious formula; see Feissel 1985, 84.
- 30 Feissel 1985, 95–100. Three Persian, one Thracian, one possible Semitic, and nineteen Greek names are included in this small corpus. It should be emphasized that no Roman name is present in the dossier.
- 31 On Antioch’s Jewry and its integration: Kraeling 1932; Sandwell 2007; Meeks-Wilken 1978; Kasher 1982; Downey 1938. Brooten 2000 29–36, offers a positivist survey about Antiochene Jews-Gentiles relations. On the riots, *Downey, History* 447. The rural districts of Antioch were not exempt from clashes either: instructive is an outbreak of violence in Imma between Jews and Christians in the early fifth century CE. See Socr. *HE.* 7.16.
- 32 Laffi-Christof 2014; Weir 2008; *Lost Ancient City*, 139.
- 33 Laffi-Christof 2014, 163.
- 34 Millar 2007, 112.
- 35 Millar 2007: the expression is borrowed from ter Haar Romeny 1997.
- 36 Van Dam 2008, 457.
- 37 *Downey, History* 403–410.
- 38 Van Dam 2008, 469.
- 39 *Malalas* 13, 30. Brands-De Giorgi 2016.
- 40 *Malalas* 10.10; 11.9. See Chapter 2 for the discussion about Seleucid sculpture –original and new – embedded in the built environment of the city during the Roman period and Late Antiquity.
- 41 *BMC.* 504.Ric. 2, Part 1 Vespasian 1550. *ANS* 1944.100.39966.
- 42 *IGLS* 3.1. 821; see also Chapot 1902, 162.
- 43 Scarborough-Burnside 2010, 354.
- 44 Gillis 1994, 3.
- 45 *Life of St. Simeon* 28.8.
- 46 See Chapter 5, p. 149.
- 47 *IGLS* 3.1.740
- 48 Harper 1928.
- 49 Millar 1993, 5–6. *SEG* 7. 341.
- 50 Chapter 4. For the original text see *IGLS* 2. 376.
- 51 Downey 1967, on the “intellectual” vs. “popular” reading of these media.
- 52 *Levi, Pavements* 253–255.
- 53 *Downey, History* 373; *Levi, Pavements* 255.
- 54 These were the people who lived in the Mt. Cassius region, according to Wilbrand d’Oldenburg. See *Dussaud* 424.
- 55 *SGLIBulg.* 210: Ζηρόβις Ἀντι|οχεὺς Λαρ|μαναζηνός
- 56 Peña-Castellana-Fernández 1990, 199–202.
- 57 Robert-Robert 1965, 71–72.
- 58 Feissel 1991, 294. See also Chapter 5 for the topography of the region and its archaeological remains.
- 59 Mécérian 1964, 45.
- 60 Trombley 2004.
- 61 Feissel 1991, 300.
- 62 Liebeschuetz 2007, 427–433.
- 63 Liebeschuetz 2007, 429.
- 64 Griesheimer 1997. Although the urban necropoleis are not known, a few soundings conducted by the Princeton team on the right bank of the Orontes, and in the southern expanses of the ancient city at the site of Sari Mahmoud betray a picture of funerary architecture that was eclectic in nature, as it reconciled a variety of building traditions and decorative idioms: the presence of hypogea,

arcosolia, and mosaic decoration are but some of the elements that inform the local tradition.

65 Str.1.4.9.

66 As for the dialog among Antioch's many constituencies it is worth looking into Theod. *HR*, 26 on the life of St. Simeon, An Arab tribe (φυλῆ) asks a prayer for his philiarch (φυλάρχος) a title that is conferred to the chief of Arab confederations. On the presence of these in northern Syria, see also Procopius of Caesarea, *de Bello Persico*, I, 17, 46.

CONCLUSIONS

1 In particular see *Or.* 11, 23.

2 For the state of the question see in particular Cumont 1934, Downey 1958, Callu 1997, and Will 1997.

3 The range of population for ancient Antioch is rather ample; from 150,00 to 250,000. John Chrys. *Hom.* 4; *Lib. Ep.* 1119. As for the initial settlement, *Malalas* 8.15 contends that the initial population of the city tallied 5300 units from Antigonía, thus producing a number that is close to the 6000 inhabitants reported for Seleucia Pieria, see Plb 5. 61.1.

4 *ILS* 2683. On Apamea at the time of the Early Roman empire see Balty 1988, 91–104.

5 Jul. *Mis.* 489. See the previous discussion in Chapter 3, n. 1.

6 Thonemann 2011, 244.

7 Ball 2000, 115–118.

8 Boffo 2007; Vannesse 2011, 700–718.

9 *Sid. Apoll. Ep.* I.8.2. On Syrians in the west, see Cracco Ruggini 1959, 186–308; Feissel 1982, 319–343, and especially 320–325. Evidence of Syrians abroad keeps turning up: the gravestone of one Maraotes from the kome of Kaprobatis near Apamea is an example. Whether for personal business or under imperial mandate he ended his days in the town of Angera, in the environs of Lago Maggiore (northern Italy). See David-Mariotti 2005, 267–278.

10 Boffo 2007; Nuzzo 2006, 537–545.

11 David-Mariotti 2005, 275. On the architectural implications of the cults of St. Paul and St. Thecla, their spiritual association and their material evidence in Antioch see Kleinbauer 1973, 89–114.

12 Contardi-Garanzini 2012, 227. The mosaic is on display at the Museo di Antichità in Torino, Italy. It was acquired by the royal collections in 1742 after the discovery of a villa in the area of Stampace, Cagliari (ancient Caralis).

13 *IG* 14. 2330.

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